

OYSTER BAY

1653-1700

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OYSTER

BAY

TOWN SPOT

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I P 354 P 355

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HORSE NECK
OR
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COLD SPRING

HARBOR

COVE NECK

TO HUNTINGTON

OYSTER RIVER

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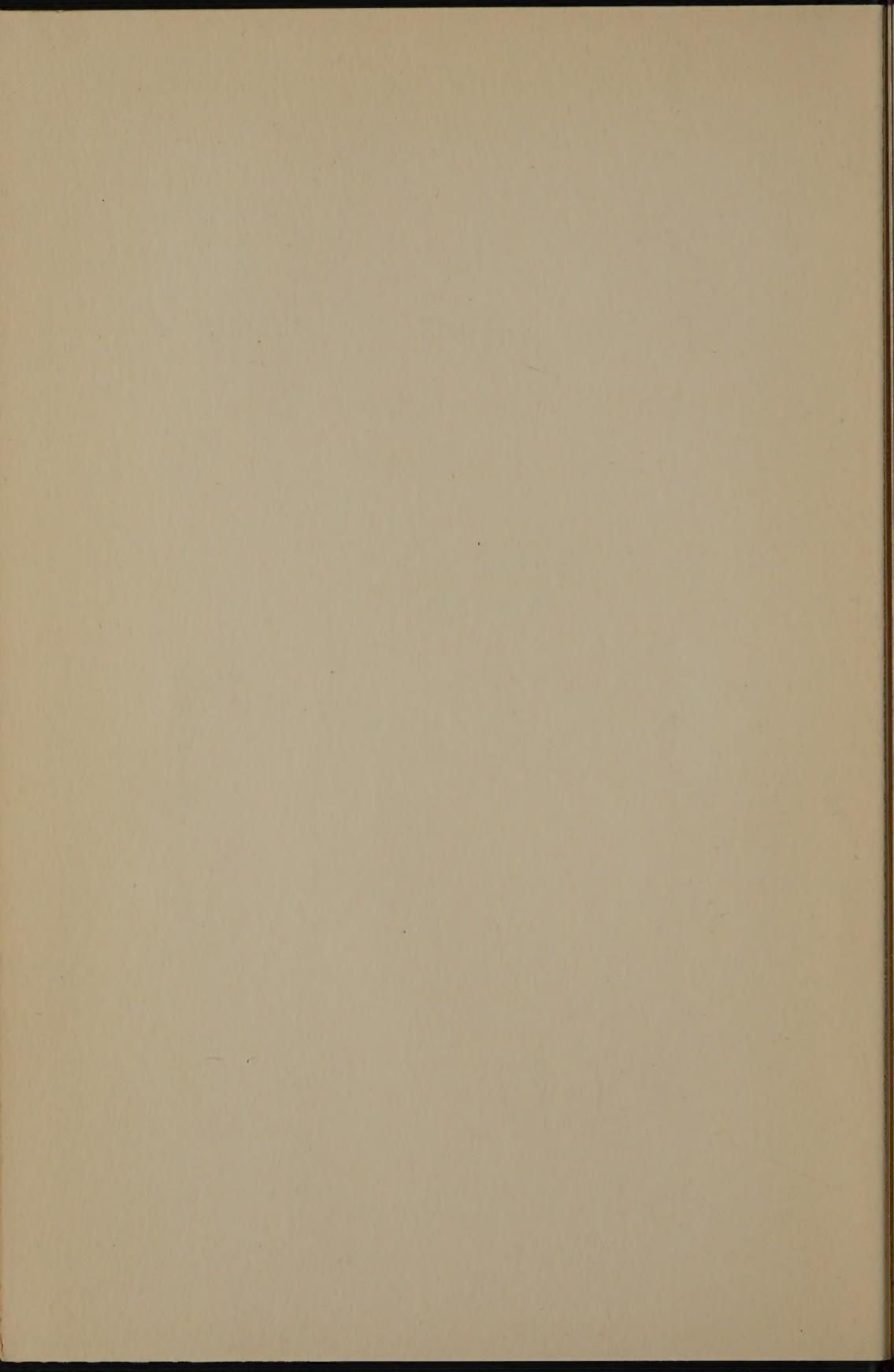
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OYSTER BAY
1653-1700



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The Village Of Oyster Bay, N.Y. Its Founding and Growth From 1653 to 1700

by
Van S. Merle-Smith, Jr.

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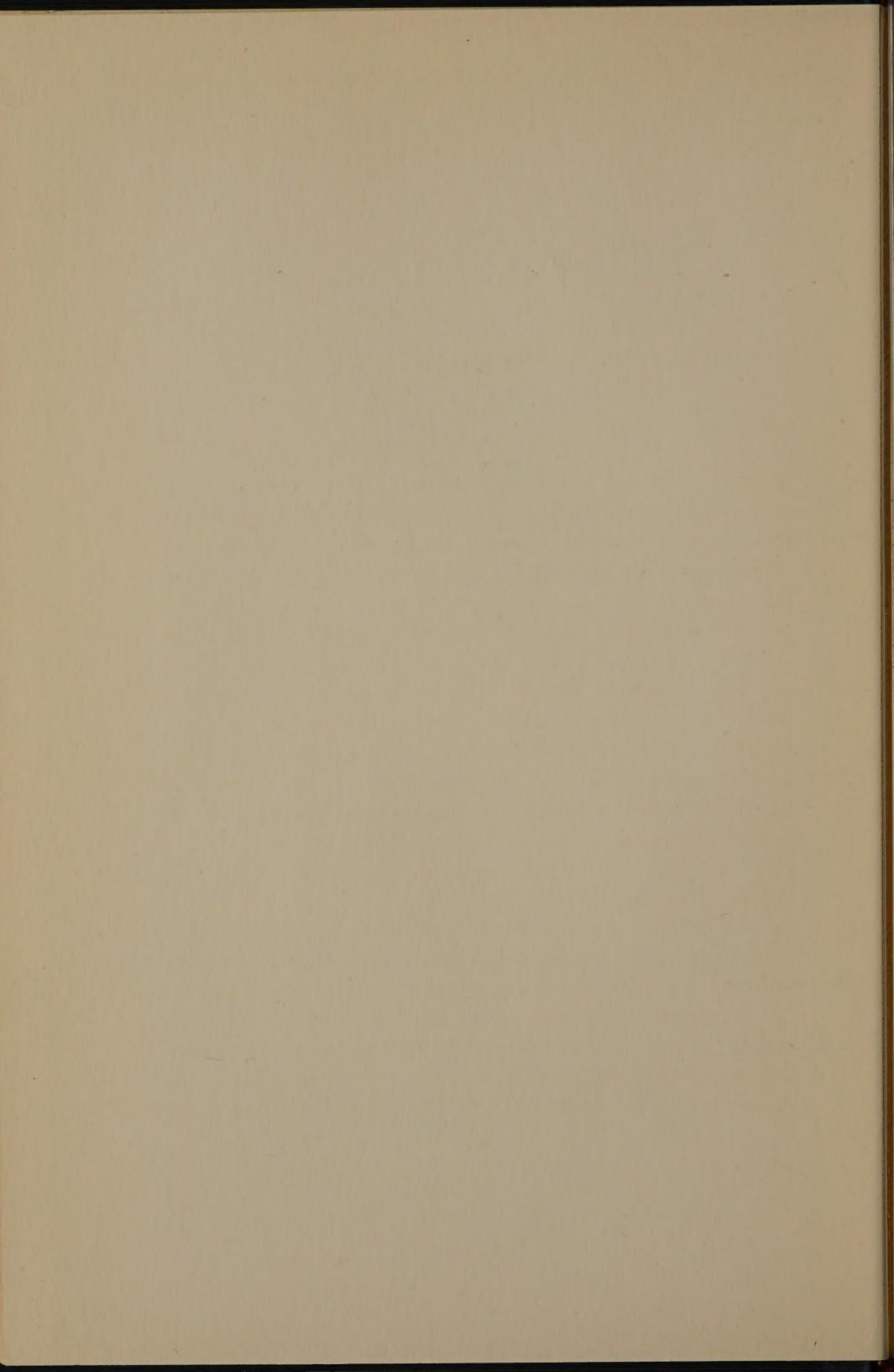
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in the Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University.
June, 1950

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Dedicated to my children who
may be proud of the role
their ancestors played
in the founding of
Oyster Bay



Preface

WOODROW WILSON ONCE STATED THAT "THE HISTORY OF A Nation is only the history of its villages written large." This thought, plus a personal interest in the village of Oyster Bay derived from living in it for over thirty years has prompted this paper.

My purpose is to give as fully as possible a picture of the founding and early growth of Oyster Bay, an English colony not quite typical of English colonies elsewhere. Situated as it was on the border between Dutch and English Long Island it was for over ten years almost the pawn of two governments who were at each other's throats. The period covered is from the founding in 1653 to 1700 by which time the township had acquired its present geographical form and the social and economic life had stabilized where they would remain essentially unchanged until the American Revolution.

I have tried to confine the story to Oyster Bay village, but in many instances it has been necessary to include material from the township as a whole to give a complete and well-balanced picture.

Previous work on this subject has been limited to a few excellent but very brief treatments. The most complete is a chapter in Benjamin F. Thompson's *History of Long Island*. Silas Wood, Martha Flint, and others have included sections in their Long

Island Histories. Mr. Morton Pennypacker of Easthampton wrote a series of articles in 1919 highlighting some of the points of general public interest. The latest addition is a chapter in Paul Bailey's *Long Island, Nassau and Suffolk*, 1949, written by Frances Irvin and H. P. Horton. This work, while certainly deserving a place in the historiography of Oyster Bay, is not as accurate in some details as those of earlier date.

The sources used in the present paper are listed and discussed in the bibliography. However, the author would like to take this opportunity to thank Morton Pennypacker, Jesse Merritt, Cornell Mulford, and all the others whose enthusiastic co-operation greatly assisted in tracking down elusive information. Also Professor Richard B. Morris under whose aegis this paper was written deserves grateful thanks for his patience and constructive criticism. And last, but by no means least, this work could never have been accomplished without the skill and forbearance of Agnes Ronan and her typewriter.

Van S. Merle-Smith, Jr.
Oyster Bay—May, 1950

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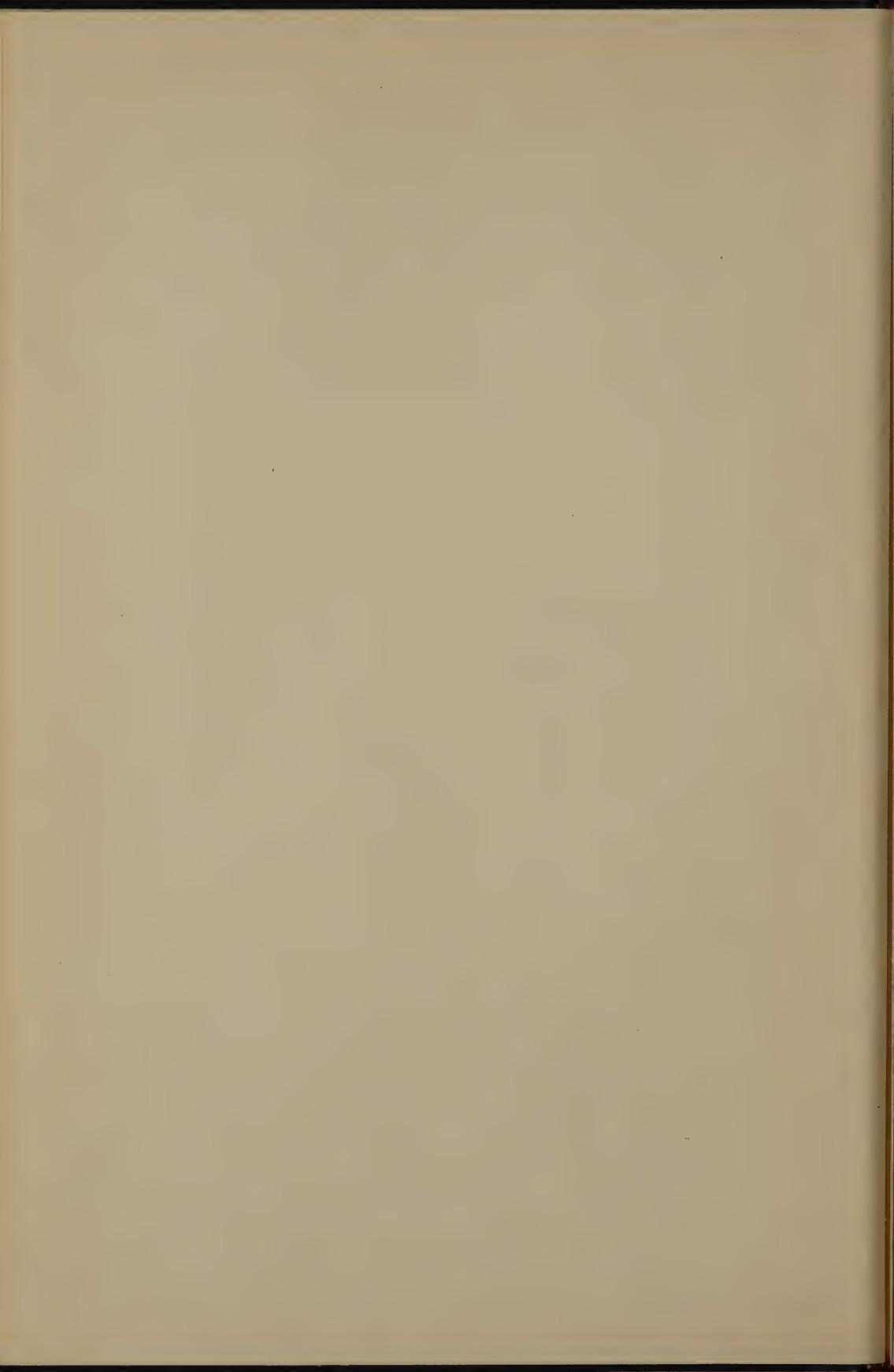
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Introduction

LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

THE TOWNSHIP OF OYSTER BAY IS LOCATED IN NEW YORK STATE about thirty miles east of New York City and lies as a belt across the full width of Long Island. On the northern edge of the township is the village of Oyster Bay situated on a fine harbor approximately two miles square. The harbor is divided north and south down the middle by a peninsula known as Center Island. The harbor opens into Long Island Sound and provides protected anchorage for ships of all sizes. From the harbor edge wooded hills rise abruptly to a height of something over one hundred feet. These hills are topped by gently rolling plateau areas with streams, gullies and ponds flowing northward through the hills to the harbor. Geologically the topography is typical of that found at the terminus of a continental ice sheet.

At the time that the colony of Oyster Bay was founded the area looked very much as it does today with two or three notable exceptions. In the village proper all of the land north of the Long Island Railroad tracks comprising what is now Roosevelt Memorial Park was nothing more than a marsh—a good part of it under water at high tide. The neck of land between Bayville and Center Island was submerged at high tide. The area as a whole was far more open with many fewer trees and much more grass land due in part to the Indian practice of burning over

land as the quickest and easiest method of keeping their grazing grounds clear. There is some reason to believe also that during those early days the streams carried more water. Wild game of all sorts, wolves, and other predatory animals were abundant.

EARLY HISTORY

The earliest deed for land in the vicinity of Oyster Bay village was granted in 1639¹ by the Earl of Sterling under a grant from the English King. He sold what are now known as Lloyd's Neck and Center Island to Matthew Sunderland, a seaman of Boston. This title was later repudiated. In the same year Capt. David Petersen de Vries in The Journal of his voyages to America relates that on June 4, he anchored in the harbor and that "there are fine oysters here, whence our nation has given it the name of Oyster Bay."²

The next attempt at an English settlement was made in the spring of 1640 when Capt. Edward Tomlins, his brother Timothy, and a few others from Lynn, Massachusetts, started to build some houses. No consent had been asked either of the Dutch or of Lord Sterling's deputy and they were soon forced to retire.

The next settlement in the area was by a deed from the Indians to Robert Williams dated May 20, 1648 for a considerable tract of land centered around what is now known as Hicksville—this became the Robert Williams plantation.

Oyster Bay is mentioned in 1650 among the Dutch records in "information relative to taking up of land in New Netherlands, in the form of Colonies or private Boweries." The pertinent portion gives a good picture and may be summarized as follows:

Oyster Bay so called from the great abundance of fine and delicate oysters which are found there has on its borders fine maize

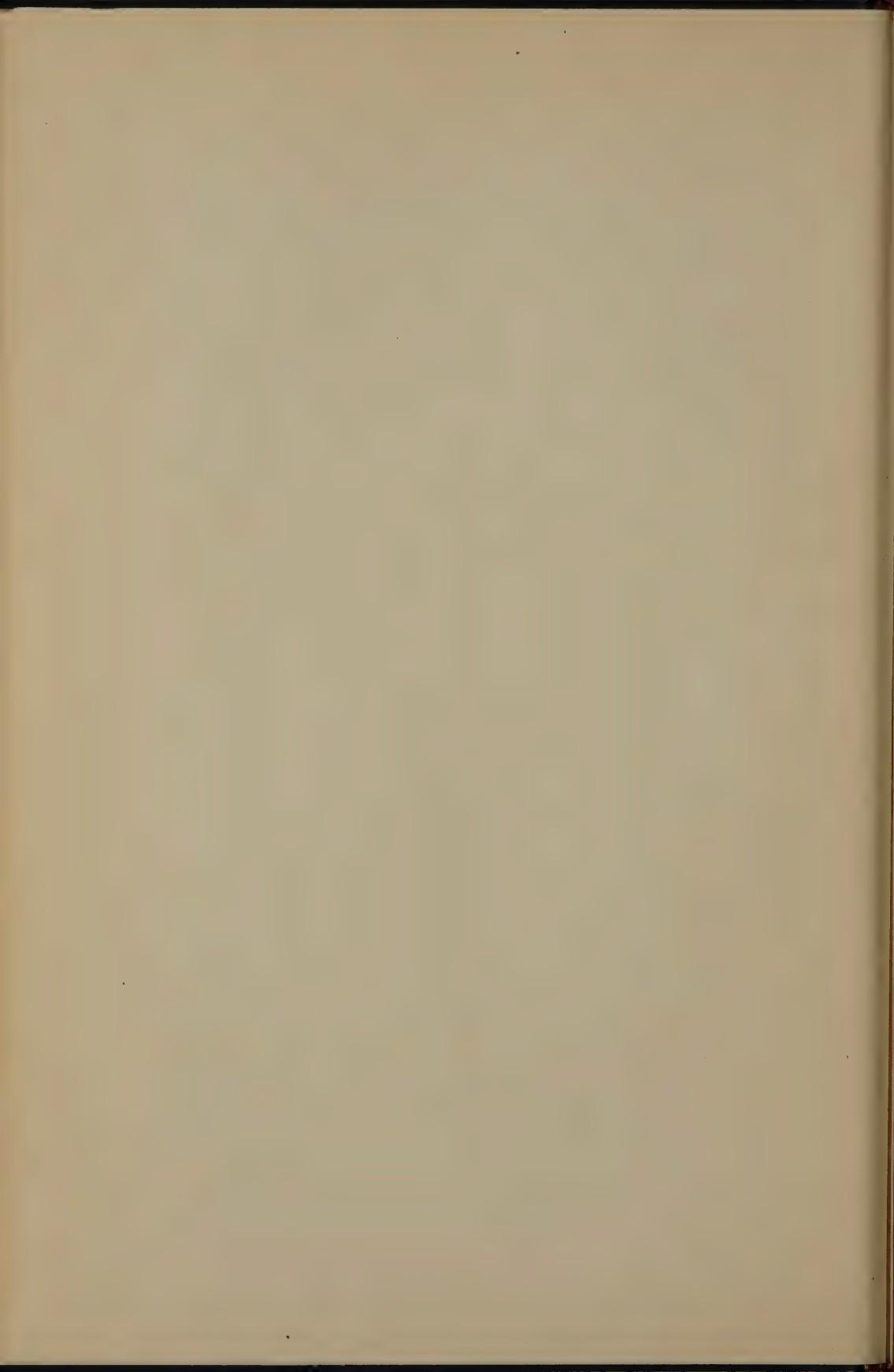
¹All dates, with the exception of those in direct quotations, have been corrected to the Gregorian calendar.

²David Peterson De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America A.D. 1632 to 1644*, as translated by Henry C. Murphy (New York, 1853) p. 124.

lands formerly cultivated by the Indians some of which they still work. They could be had for a trifle. This land is situated on such a beautiful bay and rivers that it could at little cost be converted into good farms fit for the plough. There are here and there also some fine hay valleys. Martin Gerritson's Bay or Martinnehouck [now known as West Harbor] is much deeper and wider than Oyster Bay and runs westward in [at Bayville bridge] and divides into three rivers, two of which are navigable: The smaller stream [Corn Creek] runs up in front of the Indian village of Martinnehouck [Matinecock] where they have their plantations. This tribe is not strong and consists of about thirty families. In or about this bay there were formerly great numbers of Indian plantations, which now lie waste and vacant. This land is mostly level and of good quality, well adapted for grain and rearing all sorts of cattle; on the river are numerous valleys of sweet and salt meadows; all sorts of river fish are also caught there.³

As can be seen above there were differences of opinion as to who owned the land in the vicinity of Oyster Bay—both the Dutch and the English claimed it. In 1650 an agreement was drawn up between the two nations at Hartford settling the Dutch-English boundary as running along the west edge of Oyster Bay. It was hoped that this would settle the controversy. However, in those early days geographical locations were so vaguely described that the land was in dispute until the English seized New Amsterdam in 1664 and claimed the whole of Long Island. It was during these last fourteen years that the first successful settlement on the harbor was planted and we shall see how the perseverance and tact of the early members of the community enabled them to establish a thriving town in spite of many obstacles.

³E. G. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, (Albany 1856-1883), I, 366.



CHAPTER I

The Settlement of 1653

THE FOUNDERS

Anno Dni one thousand Six hundred & fifety th[ree] This writing witnesseth yt Asiapum alias Mohenes haue sold vnto Peter Wright, Samuell Maio, William Leuerich, Their heyr Executors administrators & assignes all his Land Lyeing & Scituate upon Oyster Bay & is bounded by oyster Riuers to ye east side, & Papaguatunk river on ye west side with all ye woods, rivers marshes uplands, ponds & all other the appurtenances lying betweene the bounds afore named, with All ye Islands Lying to ye Sea ward excepting one Island Comonly Called Hog Island & bounded neere Southward by a point of trees called Canteaiug. In Consideration of which bargaine & sale he is to receaue as full satisfaction six Indian Coates, Sixe Ketles, Sixe fathom of wampum, sixe Hoes, sixe Hatchetts; three pair of stocking[s] thirty Auln-blades or Muxes [heads for eel spears], twenty Kniues, three shirts, & as much peage [black wampum] as will amount to ffoure pounds sterling In witnes whereof he hath set to his marke in ye prsence of

William Washborne

Asiapum or

Anthony Wright

Mohenes X his mark

Robert Williams

on the back is the following

we within named Sam: Maio, Peter Wright, & William Leuerich, doe accept of as ioynt purchasers with ourselves ye persons under specified to the like right privileidgs as we ourselves in ye Lands purchased of Asiopum & particularly mentioned in ye writeing made & subscribed by himselfe & other Indians respectively inter-

essed & in the names of such as were absent acted by him & them
all: witnes our hands:

joynt purchasers with vs

Mr. Washbourne

William Leuerich

Tho: Armitage

Samuell: Mayo¹

Dan: Whitehead

Anth: Wright

Rob: Williams

Joh: Washbourne

Ric: Holbrooke

WITH THIS DOCUMENT, STILL PRESERVED IN THE TOWN CLERK'S office at Oyster Bay, opens the history of the village. There were ten men present, four of whom, Peter Wright and his brother, Anthony, Samuel Mayo, and the Reverend William Leverich came from Sandwich, Massachusetts. Of the others, Robert Williams, Daniel Whitehead, Thomas Armitage, and William and John Washbourne had already settled on Long Island at Hempstead. Richard Holbrooke came from Springfield, Massachusetts. Let us look into their background and find out who these men are, and why they left their security and struck out for a new and unsettled area.

The first to get himself noted in an historic record was the Reverend William Leverich,² an Anglican minister, who arrived from England on October 10, 1633 at Salem in the ship James belonging to Captain Williams. He went immediately to New Hampshire where he became the first Pastor of the Congregational Society organized in the same year, but soon made his way to Boston where he joined the church in 1635. From there he went to Plymouth and also assisted Mr. Patridge at Duxbury in the preaching. In 1638 he was one of the founders of Sandwich, Massachusetts, and served as their minister.³ He worked

¹From original in Town Clerk's Office, Oyster Bay.

²For further references see Nathan B. Shurtleff, *Records of Plymouth Colony* (Boston, 1855), I, 88; III, pp. 36, 102, & 194.

³Silas Wood, *A Sketch of the First Settlement of the Several Long Island Towns* (2nd ed., Brooklyn, 1828), p. 43.

with the numerous Indians in the vicinity and apparently was far more interested in this missionary work than he was in having a set congregation in one community. All through the records are references to his missionary work, and even after coming to Oyster Bay, for the next five years he roamed Long Island continuing his labors with the natives. Subsequently, in 1658 he settled in Huntington where he remained until 1670 when he moved to Newtown.⁴

The first of the Mayo family to get into the records was Samuel's father, John, admitted as a freeman of Barnstable in 1640.⁵ John Mayo was a man of better than average education and became the first settled minister of the North church in Boston around 1643.⁶ At this time John and his son Samuel presumably were still living in Barnstable. Samuel with the background given him by his father soon gained a place for himself in the world around Cape Cod. It is known that he was the owner of the sloop Desire which brought the first group to Oyster Bay. Apparently, he did not remain here for the Plymouth records indicate that he continued to base himself on Cape Cod. There is a vague possibility that Samuel Mayo died at Oyster Bay 1670.⁷

The three Wright brothers, Peter, Anthony, and Nicholas lived at Lynn, Massachusetts, before moving to Sandwich. In Sandwich several of the children of Peter and Nicholas were born. Anthony was never married. Of the three Peter seems to have been the most important. In 1651 an entry in the Plymouth records names him as the Sandwich member of the "grand inquest" (grand jury) of Plymouth,⁸ and in 1652 he is mentioned

⁴Ibid. p. 33.

⁵Shurtleff, I, 140.

⁶Donald G. Trayser, *Barnstable—Three Centuries of a Cape Cod Town* (Hyannis, Mass., 1939), p. 140.

⁷W. W. Munsell & Co., ed., *History of Queens County* (New York, 1882), p. 471.

⁸Shurtleff, II, 168.

as sergeant of the military company of Sandwich.⁹ Anthony appears first on the records as the surveyor of highways for Sandwich in 1645.¹⁰ The only record of Nicholas that we find is that in 1651, he was surveyor of highways for Sandwich.¹¹ These three brothers were probably the most substantial in the community for later when they got to Oyster Bay it was not long before they were the most influential group.

Thomas Armitage¹² first appears on the Plymouth records as a member of a list of Plymouth freemen which also includes the Reverend William Leverich, March 7, 1637.¹³ The following year he was admitted as a freeman of Sandwich.¹⁴ He held the offices of town constable, deputy to the Plymouth court and prosecutor of the Plymouth Grand Jury. It would appear that Armitage was a man of better than average education and intelligence to hold jobs such as these. By 1647 he had migrated to Hempstead as he appears on the list of the first land division there.¹⁵ His first wife died there. Later he married Anne Lillystone, many years his junior, and moved to Oyster Bay early in 1659 where he died shortly thereafter.¹⁶

There were several Holbrooke families in New England at this time, but Richard appears to have been the son of John Holbrooke who lived first in Weymouth, Massachusetts, and later in Dorchester. Information is scant, but on April 2, 1653 he is named, along with Daniel Whitehead and Robert Williams, as a purchaser of the first land in Huntington from the Indians.¹⁷

⁹Ibid. III, 11.

¹⁰Ibid. II, 48.

¹¹Ibid. p. 168.

¹²For further information see Ibid., I, 87, 98, 116, 125.

¹³Ibid. I, 53.

¹⁴Ibid. p. 74.

¹⁵Benjamin E. Thompson, *History of Long Island* (3rd ed., New York, 1918), III, 109.

¹⁶Henry Onderdonk, ed., *Hempstead Town Records*, I, 110; and John Cox, Jr., *Oyster Bay Town Records*, I, 7. (Hereafter cited as TR.)

¹⁷C. R. Streed, ed., *Huntington Town Records, 1653-1873* (Huntington, 1888), I, 7.

The preface to these records mentions that there used to be a document, now lost, signing the Indian deed over to the first proprietors of that town. Holbrooke then was accepted as a proprietor of Oyster Bay later in the same year where he built the first house.¹⁸ By 1658 he had moved to Milford, Connecticut, where he died in 1670.¹⁹

Daniel Whitehead was born in 1603 and died at the age of sixty-five on November 16, 1668.²⁰ The Hempstead town records state in the preface that the original settlers of that place were joined by Daniel Whitehead "of Flushing." He is listed as a proprietor in 1647²¹ and appears through the Hempstead records numerous times after Oyster Bay was settled. From this it is safe to infer that he never lived very long in Oyster Bay. Later he was a patentee, overseer, magistrate and surveyor of Newtown. In 1653 he bought the first purchase at Huntington with Richard Holbrooke and Robert Williams.²²

Robert Williams was one of the early proprietors of Hempstead, listed as such in 1647.²³ In 1645–6 he purchased from the Indians a large tract of land centered at what is now Hicksville.²⁴ Thus he was well established in the Hempstead area for at least eight years before he appeared on the Oyster Bay purchase deed. It is difficult to trace his connection, if any, with the group from

¹⁸The family genealogy claims that Holbrooke erected the first house in Huntington and his son, Abel, was the first white child born there. This disagrees with an affidavit written several years later by one who was present at the founding of Oyster Bay which states that Holbrooke built the first house in that town. (Townsend, *Memorial to the Townsend Brothers* (New York, 1865)), p. 13. (Hereafter cited as TM.) This is substantiated by the deed of sale for his Oyster Bay property. (TR., I, 582.)

¹⁹Abner Moses, *Genealogical Record of the Early Planters of Sherborn, Holliston, and Medway, Mass.*, p. 139.

²⁰N. Y. Genealogical and Biographical Record, XXXIII, p. 101.

²¹Thompson, III, 109.

²²Street, I, 1.

²³Thompson, III, 109.

²⁴The deed is dated 1648, but the proprietor's book for the plantation gives the date of purchase as 1646 and a number of entries were made during the winter of 1645–6. (TR., I, 625; III, 626.)

Sandwich because the name of Williams was a common one. Thompson in his *History of Long Island* states that he was a close relative of the celebrated Roger Williams.

The story of William Washbourne and his son John has proven almost impossible to determine with accuracy. There are men by those names active in both Hempstead and Duxbury before and after the settlement of Oyster Bay. The author is inclined to favor Hempstead as the abode of the Washbournes who feature in this particular problem. There is a William Washbourne listed as a Hempstead proprietor in 1647²⁵ who died there early in 1659.²⁶ He was very well to do for his day owning large acreage and considerable livestock. John also appears on the Hempstead records and was dead by 1658.²⁷ That they did not play an important part in Oyster Bay's early years could be accounted for by their being settled elsewhere and their early demise.

The men who established the colony at Oyster Bay were a homogeneous group of planters. The majority had come from the farms of England in their youth, matured in the Plymouth colony, and came here with a background and knowledge well suited to the task ahead. The younger members, having grown up in New England, were likewise no strangers to hardship and labor. There were no artisans as such in the group although a working knowledge of weaving, blacksmithing, carpentry, and tanning was a prerequisite to any man's existence in those days. Needs other than their own hands were able to provide were brought by boat from time to time from the New England colonies. That these men succeeded in their aims, and there is no record of failure, is a credit to them and their descendants.

²⁵Thompson, III, 109.

²⁶Onderdonk, I, 32.

²⁷Ibid., p. 70.

THE SETTLEMENT

It is difficult to determine why these men left to found a new colony. The most common drive for colonization in that period was religious intolerance or dissatisfaction with the bigoted attitude of the Puritans in Plymouth. This, however, does not seem to have been the case among the founders of Oyster Bay. Most of the men were farmers. Only one was a minister and he did not stay long enough to give the colony any spiritual leadership.

If the motive for the new colony was not religious intolerance it is more than likely that they sought more and better land. Increased grazing and planting taxed the land in the vicinity of Sandwich and Samuel Mayo on his trading voyages undoubtedly brought word from their old friends who had moved to Hempstead earlier that the shores of Oyster Bay Harbor would be ideally suited to their needs. Thus it was that William Leverich, Peter Wright, and his brother Anthony came to load their families and belongings on Samuel Mayo's sloop to found a new colony with those who had emigrated earlier from the Cape Cod area.

There is some question as to whether they landed in Hempstead Harbor to seek shelter in houses built there in an earlier attempt to colonize until they could get proper houses built for themselves in Oyster Bay, or whether they sailed directly into Oyster Bay and around into West Harbor. In any event their first misfortune befell them before they could even get unloaded.

It was customary during this period for English ship owners to obtain letters of mark from various colonies permitting them to prey on the Dutch as privateers. One of these men was a Thomas Baxter who had at least pretended authority from the Rhode Island colony and seeing a ship in West Harbor or in Hempstead Harbor whichever the case may be, he seized it, alleging that it was within the limits of Dutch territory and therefore must be a Dutch ship. The ship, of course, was that of

Samuel Mayo. On an appeal by Mayo to the general court of Hartford it was adjudged that Baxter should pay Mr. Leverich 150 pounds but that the sails, ropes, two guns, etc., if returned with the vessel should be accounted as eighteen pounds toward that amount. This seizure happened some time prior to November 22, 1653 as in the records of the New Haven court for this date mention is made of this seizure.²⁸ Thomas Baxter was a thoroughly bad character with a particularly unsavory reputation as a privateer whose letters of mark cloaked his acts of plain piracy.

It was the usual practice when planting a new colony to begin some time during the spring or at least early summer, thus gaining several months of fair weather during which to build shelters, get crops in and be well organized before the hard winter set in. For some reason Oyster Bay was not settled until some time in late summer or possibly even early fall. Since the town records do not go back any further than 1661 the only picture that we have of the first activities is from two affidavits, one by Nicholas Simkins and another by Samuel Titus, both of whom apparently were present at the original settling. The affidavits themselves were taken some thirty years later in connection with another matter. Nicholas Simkins says in part that:

I, being at the first settlement of Oyster Bay which was in the year 1653, Peter Wright, William Leverich, and Samuel Mayo, they being the first three purchasers, as by the grand deed from the Indian sachem, and they being mentioned in the deed as purchasers, condescended to the others, to make a settlement of the set purchase, and for [] did accept of William Washburn, and his son John Washburn, Daniel Whitehead, Robert Williams, Richard Holbrook, as equal purchasers with them, and forthwith indorsed the same on the back side of the bill of sale; that being done and agreed upon, they immediately proceeded to laying out allotments; but first they laid out all the highways in the town,

²⁸Charles J. Hoadly, *Records of the Colony of New Haven 1628-65* (Hartford, 1857-8), II, 48.

by joint consent, secondly, beginning at the mill river, from, and so eastward to the harbor side they laid out upward of twenty lots, granting equal privileges to every lot.²⁹

Samuel Titus' affidavit throws a little more light on the subject of the lots when he says:

The said purchasers of the town did condescend to each other, to have no more in the propriety thereof but to be equal alike, which was, every purchaser a home lot containing six acres, and others, that were to be taken in as townsmen, to have but five acre lots.³⁰

It would be fascinating if we could watch a group such as this breaking in virgin territory in the rush to get settled before cold weather. First they laid down the streets which at that time were probably only what are now West Main Street and South Street. Then the lots had to be laid out.³¹ The original town spot extended from the mill pond on the west, probably no further than where the Episcopal church now stands on the east and south as far as Pine Hollow. The original lots were laid out on the two streets. It is interesting to note in Samuel Titus' affidavit that every purchaser was to have exactly equal shares and that the original purchasers were to get six-acre lots and those who were admitted later were to have only five-acre lots.

With winter not very far off the building of houses was of immediate importance and everyone set to work. Apparently Richard Holbrooke was the first man to get a house up.³² There is no record, however, of what type of house this was. If the custom of some of the other English colonies on the eastern end of the Island was followed some of these families probably dug cellars. In a letter from the Dutch Governor General, Cornelis

²⁹TM., p. 12.

³⁰TR., II, 690.

³¹Surveys were relatively crude. The unit of measurement used in all surveys at this time was the rod and rods were of different lengths. However, there is clear evidence of the eighteen foot or woodland rod being used in this area.

³²TM., p. 13.

Van Tienhoven, to the States General in Holland in 1650, these cellars are described as a square pit six or seven feet deep and as long and as broad as the colonists thought proper. The earth inside was cased all around the wall with timber which they lined with the bark of trees or something else to prevent cave-ins. The ground floor was planked and wainscotted overhead for a ceiling. They raised a roof of spars over the whole and covered these with bark or green sods. The cellar was partitioned as desired where they could be snug and dry for one to four years. This was done for two reasons; first, not to waste time, which should be used to get in food; secondly, so as not to discourage the poorer people.³³

While the colonists were thus engaged in getting themselves settled another problem arose. The original three purchasers, William Leverich, Peter Wright and Samuel Mayo had never paid the Indians for the land, and the natives were growing extremely restless. It would appear that the purchasers did not have a great deal of money for according to Simkins' affidavit they asked William Smith and John Titus to prepay for the goods to pay the Indians. This was done in beef with Nicholas Simkins acting as slaughterer and the meat was sent over to Mr. Bryant³⁴ in Milford, Connecticut, a merchant from whom could be obtained the clothing and hardware required in the purchase deed. When time came to levy the rate for the purchase it was found to come to eighteen shillings and ten pence a man. After having received the money for the land the Indians became perfectly friendly and no more trouble was experienced with them during the history of Oyster Bay.³⁵

How many of the original houses were of the salt box type is

³³E. G. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, (Albany 1856-1883), I, 368. (Hereafter cited as Col. Doc.)

³⁴Mr. Bryant appears again in the records in 1660 when he buys the house and land which Daniel Whitehead had previously bought of Robert Williams. (TR., I, 2.)

³⁵TM., p. 13.

not known, but that does seem to have been the prevailing architecture in the seventeenth century. Let us look at one of these houses a little more closely. Typically, the ridge-pole of this house was set far to the front from which a short thatched roof pitched to the top of the second story.³⁶ The back roof sloped long and curveless down to the outer line of the ceiling of the ground floor, reaching out a wing beyond that to cover the ell that nestled close to the main house. The chimney was set well forward. The house always faced south regardless of the highway. The wide front door with long iron hinges stretching across it opened into a small hall or entry from which by a few steps and a landing at top and bottom the staircase wound against the back of the chimney leading to another short hall above. From each end of these entries opened rooms large and square leading again to other rooms and on the lower floor the whole front of the great chimney made the cheer of the long kitchen.

When the weather let up enough after the first winter, gardens were started near each house to provide food for the daily table. All sorts of pot herbs were planted mainly parsnips, carrots and cabbage, and corn was grown in some of the other fields to provide meal and food for cattle. The house lot as a whole was fenced in to keep cattle out of the garden.³⁷ Their meat was both domestic and wild. Deer were abundant and many rabbits, squirrels and various wild game birds found themselves in the stew pot. Domestic meats included beef and mutton and ham.

The type of government set up in the town at this early period might be styled as a pure form of democracy. All the male inhabitants met together in an open town meeting and since there

³⁶There are numerous references to creek thatch throughout the Town Records.

³⁷References to six-hole posts indicate post and rail fences. Judging from the frequency with which they were put up and taken down in changing the shape of cattle pastures and setting up calving pastures, etc., they must have been panel fences made of light sections which could be set up temporarily as needed. (TR., I, 203.)

were not more than ten to fifteen people involved in the early days, all business, administrative, legislative, and judicial, was conducted in this town meeting by a simple majority vote. The officers of the town were elected and included the constable, the surveyor of fences, and the surveyor of highways.

CHAPTER II

Oyster Bay During the Dutch Occupation of New Amsterdam **1653-1664**

THE SEARCH FOR A GOVERNMENT

DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF OYSTER BAY'S EXISTENCE THE village was in the unenviable position of being on what was then the frontier of the English territory against the Dutch. This was at a time when the Dutch and English in Europe were having considerable difficulty in their relations with each other and the new colonists found themselves too far away from Boston or New Haven for proper government and too close to New Amsterdam for comfort.

On May 31, 1654 the records of the General Court of New Haven tell us that Mr. Leverich had written to ask if the plantation at Oyster Bay might be admitted as a member of the New Haven colony. The court agreed that this was satisfactory if after Mr. Leverich had consulted further with Oyster Bay they still wanted to join.¹

The Dutch insisting that they owned the land on which Oyster Bay had been planted, in spite of the treaty of 1650, sent a group to investigate the colony in January 1656.² Since

¹Hoadly, I, 98.

²Col. Doc., XIV, 311.

the villagers refused to remove as ordered by the Dutch, Cornelis Van Tienhoven in April sent an order to William Leverich in the name of Peter Stuyvesant and the Dutch Council of New Amsterdam to leave at once with all the colonists. They were not to proceed with building, clearing, cattle feeding or hay mowing but to depart within thirty days with all the people, servants or slaves, furniture, implements and every article of property which was brought with them.³

Being under extreme pressure from the Dutch Mr. Leverich and the townsmen again wrote to the Governor at New Haven desiring that their plantation be admitted as a member of that colony and again action was postponed as no representative of Oyster Bay was present at the New Haven court to answer questions.⁴ This left the village in a very precarious situation. It was on land claimed by two governments although the treaty of 1650 had definitely placed the boundary on the west edge of Oyster Bay. Therefore, by treaty it was English territory.

Peter Stuyvesant himself came to the village probably some time in 1656 to investigate the situation and he must have had a very glib tongue for on January 23, 1658 the townsmen wrote him proposing that they be taken under the Dutch government. This letter states so distinctly their position that it will be quoted in full:

Honored Syr.

Synce youre last beeinge att Oysterbay, wee have reseued Nether Lyne nor Leter from you, wee dout not but you stylly beare in Mynd the proposyshons then mayd, namly, that yould ether make oute the Ryght and Tytele of the place to be youres or give ve vnder youre hand to free vs from Insuing Damige of a Leter sent from gouernor Eyeton whych leter was produced and parvsed by Mytr Leveryge at youre being there, and since that tyme wee have Reseued noe more it is not oure desyre to Lyue from under gouernment if therefore it may in meshure stand wyth your wor-

³Ibid., II, 160.

⁴Hoadly, I, 140.

shypes plesure to manifest what you Intend Concernyng the playce wee shall wyth a wyllinge Redines atend your worshype wyth our ansquers soe not further to Trubele at prsent wee humbly take our leaue and Reste youre ever Loueinge frendes from Oysterbay the 23th of January 1657.

To the Ryght worshypfull Pieter
Steavanesant Dyrekton governer
of the New netherlands these
present

Thomas Armatag	Daniel Whythead
Peter Wright	Roberd Wyliames
Nicholas Wright	Nycklas Symson
Anthony Wright	John Dickinson

These in the name of the Rest.⁵

Nothing ever came of this attempt to join the Dutch jurisdiction.

This course of things caused much perplexity for in order to avoid giving offense to either power, the people here were under the necessity of observing a sort of neutrality between the contending parties and on December 13, 1660 the inhabitants in town meeting resolved that no person should intermeddle to put the town either under the Dutch or the English until the difference between them should be settled under the penalty of fifty pounds sterling.⁶

Dutch-English relations were strained throughout this whole period and in February 1659 the Directors General of the Dutch West India Company wrote to Stuyvesant directing that he build a blockhouse "at our extreme limits, advanced to Oyster Bay"⁷ to stave off the encroachment of the English.⁸ Stuyvesant was

⁵Col. Doc., XIV, 384.

⁶Thompson, III, 64.

⁷Thompson in his Long Island history places this blockhouse as being on Hempstead Harbor. However, the wording of the letter itself would seem to indicate that it was immediately against the Oyster Bay boundary which at that time could not have been further west than the stream running north along the west edge of Mill Neck.

⁸Col. Doc., XIV, 430.

very pigheaded about the location of this blockhouse wanting to place it still further east and a heated correspondence flashed back and forth across the ocean for three years between Stuyvesant and the Directors General. The net result was the blockhouse never was built.⁹

On January 8, 1662 Oyster Bay finally swore allegiance to Britain and resolved to afford all possible protection to those who should be molested by the Dutch for exercising authority in the town at the joint expense of the villagers.¹⁰ Two years later Connecticut received her charter embracing "the islands adjacent" which included Long Island and on October 23, 1662 the General Court of Hartford declared that the Long Island towns were annexed to Connecticut ordering them to send representatives to the General Assembly the following May. John Richbell and Robert Forman were chosen to help administer the freeman's oath and act as magistrates or Senators.¹¹ Thus, after eight years of living a precarious and unsettled existence under neither Dutch nor English, the village of Oyster Bay finally acquired a government to which they could turn if necessary for help, advice and protection.

The joy of the settlers at having found a sovereign was short-lived. The English still believed that they had title to all of Long Island instead of just the eastern part of it and in 1663 King Charles' Committee on Foreign Plantations appointed a man named John Scott along with two others to examine the situation and use force if necessary to expel the Dutch from the English territory. He was further commissioned to incorporate Long Island with Connecticut.¹²

Capt. Scott came at once to the western end of Long Island and found all the English-settled towns ripe for revolt against

⁹Ibid., pp. 430-40, 449, 469, 503, 508.

¹⁰Thompson, III, 65.

¹¹Martha B. Flint, *Early Long Island* (New York, 1896), p. 282.

¹²Ibid., p. 285.

the Dutch. Oyster Bay while actually in what was accepted English territory was so close that it was included with the other towns further west. The dictatorial attitude of Peter Stuyvesant and his Council, coupled with the fact that he was a Dutchman dictating to Englishmen, caused much unrest. One ordinance in particular passed in 1662 struck hard at Oyster Bay. It provided that no conventicle, which would mean a Quaker meeting, should be held in houses, barns, ships, woods, or field under penalty of fifty gilders for each individual, doubled and quadrupled with "arbitrary correction" for each succeeding offense. The importation of "seditious and seducing" books was banned, and the lodging of persons arrived without reporting themselves and taking the oath of allegiance subjected the offenders to severe penalties.¹³ The English on Long Island at this time were not too satisfied with Connecticut either for they felt that Connecticut had made a number of offers and yet had produced nothing concrete in the way of assistance and protection.

John Scott, a remarkably astute although unscrupulous man, gathered together the English-settled towns under Dutch jurisdiction and Oyster Bay into "a combination to manage their own affairs without the aid of Connecticut, to elect their own officers, to draw up a code of laws . . . and to fully empower the said Capt. John Scott to act as their President until his Majesty should establish a government among them." The names of several of the towns were changed and Oyster Bay became Folkestone.¹⁴ John Scott by playing the Dutch against the colony of New Haven had now gathered the English towns together in sufficient strength with himself as "President" to force Peter Stuyvesant into an agreement that the towns would remain under the King of England without molestation from him for twelve months or longer, viz "vntil His Majesty of England and the States-General doe determine the whole difference about the said

¹³Thompson, I, 446.

¹⁴Flint, p. 286.

Island.”¹⁵ This agreement kept the situation of the English towns under the Dutch from deteriorating further until the Dutch had surrendered New Amsterdam to the English within the year specified in the agreement.

THE TOWN GOVERNMENT

The development of the town meeting was fairly typical of other English colonies. Initially the first settlers simply met at someone's house and decided whatever matters were necessary. Since each actually owned a share of the original purchase they were termed “proprietors” or “free-holders” and might be likened to the stockholders of our modern corporations.

Each person who subsequently wished to settle in Oyster Bay had to be accepted by a vote of these free-holders. Some of the newcomers were admitted as free-holders on paying an amount calculated to make their investment in the town equal to their predecessors. Others were admitted simply as townsmen and they might so remain, or on payment of their share and by a “free vote” (i.e. vote of the free-holders) many became freemen in their own right.

As the population increased it was natural for the free-holders to strengthen their position and retain what they felt was their proper right to control the colony. They alone were eligible to hold office and elect men to office. The right to grant common (community held) lands, common grazing rights and house lots was reserved to the free-holders, and there was no limit to the amount of land they could take up for planting purposes. The rest of the townsmen could vote only on matters of general communal interest, such as defense, morals, taxes and crimes; and were limited specifically regarding the rights of common lands they might hold. The women, with few exceptions, had no vote unless inherited or granted as a widow's right.

In the beginning there was no formal governing body as we

¹⁵Col. Doc. XIV, 544.

think of it today. All regulations concerning the welfare of the town were thoroughly thrashed out and decided by all the male members of the community met together under some convenient roof. This was the town meeting in embryonic form. At a very early date a constable was elected whose functions combined those of a present day mayor and a chief of police. By 1668 four overseers were chosen and empowered to act with the constable on routine matters to lend more continuity to the public administration and avoid having to call a town meeting to decide every minor question.¹⁶ By 1673 a Town Marshal was added and four years later deputy constables were elected by each of the outlying communities such as Mosquito Cove, Matinecock, and Littleworth.¹⁷

The functions of the court were still incorporated in the general meeting as late as 1663 when anyone who broke any order or agreement had to stand the judgment and sentence of "the towne."¹⁸ However, by 1666 under the provisions of the Duke's laws the court became a separate entity consisting of the constable and four men.¹⁹ These men had authority to try all cases both civil and criminal although practically the only questions which arose were disputes over land or debts. A jury of six men was available but in most cases the matter was left to the court or some disinterested party summoned by the constable.²⁰ Unlike Newtown whose town court records were kept separately, those of Oyster Bay appear scattered through the town records. In 1668 business was conducted at a "Towne Meeting and Court" indicating that while the two bodies were separate, in practice their functions were often intermingled.²¹

¹⁶TR., I, 204.

¹⁷TR., I, 235.

¹⁸TR., I, 10.

¹⁹TR., I, 19, 98.

²⁰TR., I, 221.

²¹TR., I, 237.

The problem of taxes in those early years was a very simple one; about the only town expenses were wolf and fox bounties and care of an occasional poor person or widow. When a particular situation came up requiring the outlay of town funds an assessment was made on every townsman equally and in that way the obligation was met.

LAND POLICIES IN THE OLD PURCHASE

In order to fully understand the structure and functioning of an English colony, such as Oyster Bay, it is necessary to investigate the land. How was it acquired and in whom was the title vested? What methods or principles were used in its distribution? According to the English theory the original title was vested in the Crown by virtue of exploration and discovery. This was subject to the Indian's right of occupancy, which had to be protected but the sole right of acquiring it by purchase or conquest was in the Crown or its grantees and the natives were not permitted to sell to any other. An Indian deed was necessary if a colony or individual was to prove legal title to the land they claimed.²²

On April 22, 1635 King Charles, I, issued letters of patent to William, Earl of Sterling, for the whole of Long Island. As we have seen earlier there were several attempts after that to settle in the vicinity of Oyster Bay under Lord Sterling's patent. However, none of these were successful until in 1653 the Reverend William Leverich with his group arrived and bought the first or "old purchase" from the Indians. We can only assume that he was acting under Lord Sterling's patent for no documentary evidence to prove this point can be found. The signing of the deed vested the title to the original purchase in Peter Wright, Samuel Mayo and William Leverich. These in turn "accepted as equal purchasers with them" seven more—they, therefore, having put up their proportionate share of the purchase money, became the

²²Melville Egleston, "The Land System of the New England Colonies," *Johns Hopkins University Series*, Ser. IV, Nos. XI, XXI, pp. 4-6.

ten original owners of the land. It was held in common by the group as proprietors.

The first thing the proprietors did was to decide that each should have a home lot of six acres and that subsequent arrivals in the town should be granted five acres.²³ All the rest of the land was still held in common. The five or six acres in the house lots was sufficient for growing most of their vegetables and herbs required in cooking. However, almost immediately it became necessary to have larger fields for crops and pasturage. Each inhabitant was given a "right" granting certain prerogatives in the common held land. These prerogatives varied from time to time and we shall try and trace their development.

Prior to 1660 every townsman was given a lot or meadow for pasturage of his cattle somewhere in the vicinity of the village proper. A number of the lots were in the meadow north of what is now Main Street; others were east and south of the town spot. Some planting land was also given out in small lots but their location is impossible to determine with accuracy because the town records do not go back before 1660.

While no definite statement can be found it appears that in this year grants were made of ten acres each to the townsmen for planting land.²⁴ Also about this time meadows at Matinecock were laid out to the free-holders only in definite lots on land bought by Daniel Whitehead from the Indians in 1658 and deeded by him to the town in 1661.²⁵

On September 3, 1663 we find the first clear statement of policy regarding the common land: Whether free-holder or not every inhabitant was to have twenty acres in common land beyond one mile from the town. However, those who had already taken up land within or without a mile of the town must consider that as part of this twenty acres and he could now be granted

²³TR., II, 690.

²⁴TR., I, 3, 10.

²⁵TR., I, 9, 354.

only the difference. Those that took up land had to pay the common charges whether or not they improved it, but if a man wished to confine himself to ten acres he could take only that and pay proportionally less. Those who had not yet taken up their ten acre lots (i.e. those granted previous to 1663 as mentioned above) had first choice in order of their age as members of the town. When this first distribution was finished then the second group of ten acre lots were to be selected on the same seniority basis until each dwelling had twenty acres. No specific locations were designated and one month was allowed for the first ten acre choices to be made. The lots were to remain common for timber until fenced.²⁶ Five years later six more acres were added and the total of twenty-six acres was known as the "first division."²⁷ It is interesting to note that on the east end of town an area was reserved for the houses of sons of the present inhabitants.

There is some evidence that this policy was not strictly adhered to and perhaps the situation began to get slightly out of hand for nine years later the town ordered that no more house lots or commonage could be granted to any person without the unanimous consent of every freeman.²⁸

By 1671 the grazing and hay problem had outgrown the Matinecock meadows and the meadows along the beach on the south side of Long Island were laid out. These had previously been acquired by the town in 1658 from the Indians.²⁹ Eighteen lots were laid out on each of three necks—each townsman getting one lot in each group. It might be well to point out that these lots included both salt and fresh hay which was cut for the winter fodder.³⁰

Three years later the meadows at Oak Neck were laid out

²⁶TR., I, 10.

²⁷TR., I, 206.

²⁸TR., I, 222.

²⁹TR., I, 348.

³⁰TR., I, 218.

and thirty-five shares divided between twenty-three men, most of whom had one or two shares with the exception of John Underhill who somehow managed to amass six.³¹ In 1676 there was a "great" or common meadow located on Hog Island (Center Island); but on the 10th of October in that year twenty-two shares of meadow were laid out, one to every man, north of the great meadow.³²

On May 21st of 1677 appears the first statutory evidence of a difference between "freemen" and the common townsman in regard to the rights in granting land. A free-holder's roster is given including the number of "town rights" which each one possessed. It is specifically stated that only the free-holders had the right to vote in the granting of common land for house lots.

In 1678 the Indians gave, as a free gift, Unkaway Neck located at the south edge of the Island. The free-holders, in appreciation of the Indian gift paid them twenty-one pounds which was made up of a tax levied equally on all of them.³³ Two years later this land was laid out in seventy lots, each one of between four and five acres.³⁴ Later on in the same year the free-holders felt that they should clarify the situation of the ordinary towns-men in regard to land and ordered that everybody who was entered in the book as having "single common rights only" was to be granted a total of twenty-six acres of common land (as per "first division") but the free-holders as listed in 1677 "may lay out to themselves what they please."³⁵

In 1682 every free-holder was instructed to take up their twenty-six acres as provided in the first division of the old purchase.³⁶ This brought about quite a flurry of town grants as these provisions were fulfilled during the year 1683.³⁷

³¹TR., I, 35.

³²TR., I, 100.

³³TR., I, 130.

³⁴TR., I, 352.

³⁵TR., I, 248.

³⁶TR., I, 258.

³⁷TR., I, 259-264.

It was not long before the town started considering a second division of land in the old purchase. It was mentioned in 1686 and again in 1688 as something to be expected in the near future, and on May 3, 1690, forty-one free-holders agreed that the new or "second division" would give fifty acres to each member of the town.³⁸

There were variations in the policy of rights in common lands. For instance, Daniel Weeks was given not a full right but a "half-right in commons and common privileges," that is to say that he could have his proportion of land by the second or any future divisions but he could not take up or claim the twenty-six acres granted in the first division.³⁹ Conversely, in 1692 Thomas Cheshire desired commonage and he was granted by the free-holders only the twenty-six acres available under the provisions of the first division.⁴⁰

For the next five or six years a considerable amount of land was given out under these provisions. The lots were all shapes and sizes, some as small as two acres and some the full fifty. No further division of the common lands in the old purchase was made during the first fifty years of the town's history.

Before leaving the subject of land it would be interesting to see how the present township of Oyster Bay grew to its present size. Of course, the first land to be acquired was the "old purchase" of 1653. This and all others can be seen by referring to the maps inside the back cover. The Robert Williams' plantation located in the vicinity of what is now Hicksville, of course, antedated the first purchase of the town proper by seven years; but it was privately owned until much later.

In 1658 all the meadow land on the water across what is now the south edge of the township was acquired by deed from the Indians.⁴¹

³⁸TR., II, 355.

³⁹TR., II, 349.

⁴⁰TR., II, 353.

⁴¹TR., I, 348.

In 1665 Hog Island (Center Island) was deeded to the town by Govert Lockermans et al.⁴² This island had originally been sold in 1639 by the Earl of Sterling under a grant from the King to Matthew Sunderland, a seaman of Boston. The Earl's title was later repudiated and Govert Lockermans purchased it along with Jacobus Becker and Van Ruyven from the Dutch Governor in 1659.⁴³

In 1668 Mosquito Cove, a tract of 1700 acres comprising what is now Glen Cove, was bought from the Indians by a group of Oyster Bay proprietors.⁴⁴ An English patent was granted in 1677⁴⁵ and the Indians gave a confirmation deed in 1684.⁴⁶

In 1678 the town purchased Unkaway Neck from the Indians located at Oyster Bay south.⁴⁷

In 1685 the town purchased a large tract of land running between what are now the villages of Glen Head and Jericho for sixty-five pounds.⁴⁸ This was always known as the "new purchase" to distinguish from that of 1653.

The rest of the land not already accounted for north of an east-west line through Jericho was bought up by individuals on purchases from the Indians between 1667 and 1685. They could not get into the area before 1664 for the Dutch held it until the British came in to New Amsterdam. In 1685 John Underhill, John Feake and William Frost bought all of the remaining unsold and undivided lands in this area from the Indians.⁴⁹

All these purchases had been made under the rights granted by the Crown Patent to Oyster Bay. In the south portion of the present township the last land was acquired by Thomas Jones

⁴²TR., I, 624.

⁴³Col. Doc. XIV, 297, 435; TR., I, 694.

⁴⁴TR., I, 682.

⁴⁵TR., I, 309.

⁴⁶TR., I, 129.

⁴⁷TR., I, 129.

⁴⁸TR., I, 331.

⁴⁹TR., I, 474.

and John Townsend in 1707.⁵⁰ Thus we see that it took just fifty-four years for all the land in the township of Oyster Bay to be acquired from the Indians.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Probably the most obvious physical blessing of Oyster Bay is its fine, large, and well-protected harbor. This fact alone would lead one to conclude that there must have been considerable activity in shipping and trade in the village. However, concrete and definite evidence is disappointingly scant and any conclusions that we are to reach must be inferred.

During the early years there was very little trade as the early settlers used most of their produce themselves and what trade there was was barter amongst themselves, wampum being about the only "money" available in any quantity. Even land and labor was bought in produce at specific rates of exchange such as, so many shillings per bushel of wheat, corn, or pound of beef. This currency in kind was continued even for the payment of taxes until sometime around 1700 when trade had brought in enough money to put it into general circulation. One would expect that boats, even small row boats or shallopss, would be of sufficient importance to be found in wills or inventories of estates. However, not one single instance has been uncovered.

The earliest evidence of any activity dealing with the water at all occurred in 1660. Peter Stuyvesant in a letter to the Directors General in Holland wrote that the English sold their cattle and corn, bacon and meat, and other commodities for beavers and then took the latter overland to their homes and villages and never brought them back. "It is, therefore, evident that they send them that way [via Oyster Bay] to New England or exchange them for English goods imported there without inspection or care." Stuyvesant recommended that a yacht be ordered to lie off

⁵⁰TR., III, 255, 487.

the mouth of the harbor to apprehend the people smuggling goods in and out of Oyster Bay.⁵¹

In 1661 Henry Townsend wrote and caused to be posted in the town the following:

These presents declareth to all people and nations whom it may consarne that the Towne of Oyster Bay in Long Iland in New England on considerations of barks and other Vessels that coms into our harbor lest any should bring to-backo heather to deprive the king of his custom ether drectly or inderectly by a pretence of landing it heere and then sele it to the Duch And lest it should be reported or Understood that wee do countinanc or connive at such proseding wee do manifest our dislike and doe alsoe declare against all such proceedings and do heerby prohibbit any of the Towne from giving any incorridgmentt to any that way: for wee are in minoritie and have not ordered to custom Tobaca neither doe wee know what it is And Therfor wee desire all to forbear heather on any such acount as wee have declared against as above said . . . signed Henry Townsend.⁵²

In the same year a dock is mentioned in the town records.⁵³

Two facts are evident—first of all there was shipping in and out of Oyster Bay at least as early as 1660; secondly, they were in trouble with both their own English government and the Dutch authorities for smuggling. From the standpoint of their relations with New Amsterdam actually there was very little that the Dutch could do since theoretically Oyster Bay was an English colony. On the other hand, Oyster Bay was so far removed from any seat of English government that it was extremely easy for ships to enter and leave without any knowledge of the Customs authorities at any of the English ports. Whether the above notice was posted in public to placate any who might appear in the town to check up on the situation or whether it was entirely sincere, is of course impossible to determine.

⁵¹Col. Doc., XIV, 469.

⁵²TR., I, 8.

⁵³TR., I, 5.

The only merchant in evidence during the Dutch period was one John Richbell who is styled as a merchant as early as 1660.⁵⁴ He must have been a successful man for at the time he sold his land in 1666, he was by far the largest land holder in the Oyster Bay area. Although there are no extant records of his commercial dealings, it is probable that the farmers brought him their cattle, corn, bacon, meat, wheat, cider, oats, barrel staves, and other produce and he acted as an agent selling them to the ships that arrived in the harbor. There is no mention of his ever having owned ships himself.

Whither these ships took the produce is again a matter of conjecture—it is known that at this time there was considerable trade between the New England colonies and the West Indies. However, did the goods loaded at Oyster Bay go direct to the Indies or did they go to some port such as Boston for transhipment? Or, on the other hand, did Dutch ships carry produce to New Amsterdam for sale to that slightly more urban community? A good guess might be that some of the material was sent directly to the Barbados, some to Boston and a good deal of it used for local coastal trade as barter to obtain such necessary items as ironware, implements, and furniture. Practically from the very first year grain was sent to Connecticut to be ground.

One of the most immediate problems that these settlers had to deal with was the converting of grain, be it wheat or corn, into meal. The earliest form of grain mill was known as a samp-mortar. Samp was made from corn soaked over night in a weak solution of lye from wood ashes to loosen the shells. After this the grain was crushed in a mortar usually made from a large section of a tree, sometimes even leaving a stump in the ground, and hollowing out a concave depression in its surface. The pestle was a slightly smaller section from the tree and since to do the job well it frequently was quite heavy it was customary, in many cases, to suspend the pestle from a springy sapling. A rod run

⁵⁴TR., I, 1.

through a hole bored transversely in the pestle served as a handle. Samp porridge was one of the common dishes. It was a boiled soup with salt beef and pork and potatoes or any other vegetables which after several days cooking got such a hard outer crust that the whole thing could be removed from the pot and eaten from the crust as from a bowl.⁵⁵

The samp mortar was not too satisfactory as only a small amount could be ground any one time. The inhabitants of Oyster Bay sent most of their grain across the Sound to Milford, Connecticut, where a mill had been established by William Fowler in 1640.⁵⁶ However, the town soon realized that they were going to have to have a mill. Apparently nobody then in the village was familiar with the miller's job, hence, search was instituted to find somebody who would come and build one.

This leads us to the Townsend family who first came to this country some time before 1640. There were three brothers, John, Henry, and Richard who arrived from Lyme Regis in Norfolkshire, England, and made their way to Lynn, Massachusetts. From there they soon appeared in New Netherland.⁵⁷ In 1645, Governor Keift of New Amsterdam gave a patent for the town of Flushing to John Townsend and others.

Henry Townsend joined him and lived there for a number of years. In September 1657, according to the Dutch records, he was condemned to pay eight pounds Flanders or to depart from the province within six weeks on penalty of corporal punishment for having called together "conventicles." These "conventicles" were a Quaker meeting, although it is not positive whether at the moment Henry Townsend was actually a Quaker himself or whether he was merely in sympathy with their teachings.

This was the beginning of four years of almost continuous

⁵⁵G. Furman, *Antiquities of Long Island* (New York, 1875), p. 226.

⁵⁶Federal Writers Project, Works Progress Administration, *History of Milford, Conn., 1639-1939* (Bridgeport, 1939), p. 10.

⁵⁷Thompson, I, 447

persecution of the Quakers by the Dutch and the Townsend brothers, particularly Henry, were in and out of jail with discouraging regularity.⁵⁸ Throughout Henry Townsend showed himself to be a man whose soul was his God's and his opinion his own.

It is a tradition that the Wrights and John Dickinson were responsible for convincing Henry Townsend that he should come to Oyster Bay and build a mill. This probably was not too difficult for early in 1661 he had again been in trouble with the authorities at New Amsterdam for harboring Quakers and giving great umbrage by going from door to door urging people, especially young people and children, to attend Quaker meetings.⁵⁹ On September 16, 1661 Oyster Bay granted him the land and permission to build the first grist mill in the town.⁶⁰

Henry Townsend began at once to fell the timber permitted him in the deed for the building of the new mill. As the grant specified it was to be "such a mill, as at Norwake on the Maine; or an English Mill, on Streame called by us Mill River." Thus we know that it was a mill driven by the flow of a stream, not a tidal mill as was so often built in this area. Its exact location is not absolutely certain as it was torn down some time near the end of the century, to be replaced by another one. However, from the description of the property and a knowledge of the terrain at that time based on a Revolutionary war sketch map, the stream flowed from the pond generally where it does today, although the pond itself was much smaller. The mill presumably was on the west side of the stream (see map Figure 1).

There is no record of Henry Townsend having been a miller before he came to Oyster Bay so how much he knew of the detail work of building a mill is impossible to say. He may have had some experience, for the first grist mill in Philadelphia was built

⁵⁸For details see: *Ibid.*, I, 348-448.

⁵⁹TM., pp. 81-83.

⁶⁰TR., I, 40.

by his brother Richard in 1683. To quote Richard Townsend's own notes "after some time I set up a mill on Chester creek which I brought ready framed from London."⁶¹ It is certain that Henry Townsend was not so fortunate to have his mill "ready framed," as the town specified in the grant to him that he was to have all the timber necessary for the construction.

Perhaps he went over to Milford and talked to William Fowler, inspecting his mill and finding out how the great machinery was put together. Perhaps the latter came to Oyster Bay and helped to guide the construction. It's quite probable that the iron work all had to be forged in New Haven and brought across the Sound just as was done for Fowler's mill when it was built in 1640 as there was as yet no forging equipment anywhere near Oyster Bay on Long Island.

The common labor in this project was done by the people of the town. Dated October 7, 1662 this entry appears in the town records:

This 7th of the 8m. 1662 it is this day ordered by that Towne that all generall work & charges about the mill the widows house & the .3. bridges is to bee ritly levied upon evry man according as thay have lots and rights in the town and after lawfull demand if that hee or thay doe refus to pay the towne doe by this order & agree that the cunstable have by this powre to seas on soe much as will answer to pay this due charg.⁶²

Also the original mill grant specifies that "wee ingaige to trench & make the dame: for the Mill, as hee should geive Direction, when he calls to have it dunn."⁶³

Whether the mill was of the overshot, undershot or breast type can only be guessed at; however, I would assume that it used an overshot wheel for I do not believe there was sufficient head to give the drive necessary for either a breast or undershot

⁶¹Marion N. Rawson, *Little Old Mills* (New York, 1935), p. 53.

⁶²TR., I, 9.

⁶³TR., I, 41.

wheel. The overshot wheel utilizes the weight of the water rather than the actual strength of flow.

At first the mill was only required to run one day a week and the miller got his pay not in money or even in trade but in his "toll." Into every batch of flour he dipped a specially made dish designed to hold a specified amount tapping it to level off any surplus and that amount was his fee. The amount of this toll was determined by the town and it is interesting to note an early example of price fixing for the records say that if "in the process of time the tole doeth encrease that less may bee suffishtient, to uphold the Mill soe that the Miller may not be discoriged, he is to have less: as understanding men in the case Chosen by him & us: shall judge. . . ." ⁶⁴ It was also provided that if the mill broke down and the miller made no attempt to repair it within six months the town would take over the right to the river and the buildings.

Henry Townsend also built a saw mill. This was of immediate importance to the settlers as up to this time the only way boards could be sawed was by means of a pit dug in the ground or in the side of a hill or perhaps even a framework of legs built over the ground on which logs were placed. One man in the pit and the other standing on top of the logs held between them a long two-men saw which they worked vertically up and down ripping the logs into boards. A water-powered saw mill was one of the first things which any of these early towns built. With it customarily went a grant to any and all timber on the common lands deemed necessary to maintain this mill. The lumber presumably was sold to the inhabitants for a nominal fee. We have no record of where this saw mill was placed but I think it can be safely assumed that it was adjacent to, perhaps even part of, the grist mill for it certainly used the same dam and mill trench, perhaps even the same mill wheel.

We can only guess at the shape and size of the grist mill but

⁶⁴TR., I, 41.

its main feature was obviously the flume and great wheel so characteristic of all the early stream-powered mills. The mention of iron work probably coming from New Haven should not mislead one as to the appearance of the interior of the mill. There were no great iron gears, steel shafts, and metal pulleys. All these parts were made of wood.

Where the millstones themselves came from is a mystery. They certainly didn't come from Long Island for there is no solid rock suitable for making them. Perhaps they came from Connecticut, or more likely still they may have come all the way from the Old Country. Millstones in general varied in size from two and a half to some six feet in diameter and from six inches to two feet thick. Normally they were incased in a wooden casing with a hopper on top. This hopper fed down into the hole in the center of the upper stone and as it turned the grain was fed out towards the edge by means of grooves cut in the grinding surfaces of the stones. The stones were also beveled so the grinding surfaces got closer near the edge and in this manner the grain was worked outwards and ground progressively finer. The upper stone could be moved vertically to control the fineness of the flour. The hopper was vibrated by means of the "damsel" so that the grain flowed easily into the eye of the upper stone.

Bolting, which is the separating of the flour from the husks, was done by hand by the individual farmers until William Bradford built a bolting mill somewhere near the end of the seventeenth century.

There is no mention of the type of dam built. While in New England stone blocks were the customary material probably the one here was either an earthen dam or perhaps was built of log cribs and then covered with earth, since no suitable stone was available unless brought over from Connecticut.

On the 23rd of October in 1688, Henry Townsend sold both his mills, the saw and the grist, to his two sons, Henry and John and to his daughter Rose and her husband. Henry and

John got three-quarters of the mill and Rose and her husband got one-quarter. He reserved for himself and his wife one-quarter of the toll from the grist mill for the remainder of their lives.⁶⁵ On June 20, 1698 Rose and Joseph Dickinson, her husband, sold their quarter share to John Townsend.⁶⁶

Later on this mill was discontinued and a new one was built by the same Townsend family further north near what is now the public bathing beach north of the Long Island Railroad tracks. The old mill trench for this mill may be seen on the west side of the Bayville road running under the railroad embankment and crossing under the road about fifty yards north of the railroad underpass. This mill was still standing in a dilapidated state within the memory of people now living.⁶⁷

Still another mill of which no trace remains was built by the Townsend family adjoining the present dam on the west end. Mr. Beekman Townsend was the last member of the family engaged in the milling business.

To sum up then, outside of those engaged in smuggling, the only businessmen in Oyster Bay during the ten years before the British occupied New Amsterdam were John Richbell, a merchant about whose business we know comparatively little and Henry Townsend, the miller, who came there first in 1661. It is a safe guess, although we have no proof of it, that there must have been by this time also at least one cordwainer, as shoemakers were called, one weaver and a cooper. Practically everybody else in town was too busy farming to take on a trade and the younger generation was not yet old enough to establish themselves.

⁶⁵TR., I, 400.

⁶⁶TR., I, 527.

⁶⁷Morton Pennypacker, *Historic Oyster Bay* (Oyster Bay, 1919), p. 6.

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CHAPTER III

Oyster Bay Under the English

THE FIGHT FOR A REPRESENTATION

WHEN THE BRITISH UNDER COLONEL RICHARD NICOLLS SEIZED New Amsterdam from the Dutch in August 1664 one of the first things he did was to convene a general meeting of all the free-holders on Long Island that could conveniently attend at Gravesend on August 23, 1664.¹ At this meeting a general outline of the policies of the English in regard to Long Island was stated including such important matters as civil and religious liberty.²

On February 8, 1664-5 notice was sent to the several towns on Long Island that they should send deputies to the town of Hempstead on the last of the month. Nicolls said that because of the inconveniences, discouragement, and inroads on civil liberties which occurred under the Dutch "it is decided to receive your best advice and information at a General Meeting." The towns were to pick their best men as "the fruite & benefitt whereof will return to themselves in full & perfect settlement . . . of all controversies . . ." This being a representative assembly and because of Nicoll's promises made at Gravesend the people were very excited over what they believed would be a sound representative government.³

The convention was called to order on March 1st with

¹TR., I, 39.

²TR., I, 34.

³Col. Doc., XIV, 564.

John Underhill, and Mathias Harvey as deputies from Oyster Bay. Underhill, in addition, was put on a committee to examine the boundaries of the towns and determine what differences there might be between them.⁴

The King's Patent and a commission from his Royal Highness, the Duke of York, vesting Colonel Nicolls with the authority to put the contents of the said patent into practice were first read. Colonel Nicolls then stated that he had prepared a body of laws hereafter to be observed. On scanning the laws the delegates noticed that they were a collection of the laws now in practice in the colonies of New England with an abatement of the severity against such matters as those of conscience and religion. They were particularly struck by the fact that the Governor was to choose the Magistrates of the towns, and the delegates appointed a committee to attend the Governor to see whether or not they might not choose their own Magistrates remarking "that some of us do know that a Parliament of England can neither make a judge nor justice of the peace." The Governor would have none of it and told the deputies that if they were to have a greater share in the government than he could allow that they must go to the King for it.⁵

In a letter of March 13th to Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Colonel Nicolls gave his own version of what happened at the convention. "I had acquainted them that I would give them the most honorable share in the government, but I found they struck at all or none and sullenly refused any offers at all which you know passes not unpunisht in other Colonies." Nicolls did one other thing which subsequently was to cause him untold headaches. He "suggested," prepared, and presented to the deputies an address to his Royal Highness the Duke of York in which the deputies declared "cheerful submission to all such laws, statutes and ordnances, which are or

⁴Ibid., p. 565.

⁵Wood, p. 174-5.

shall be made by virtue of authority from your Royal Highness, your Heirs, and successors forever."⁶

It must be emphasized that the Hempstead meeting was in no sense a legislative session. The Duke's laws had already been written and were merely promulgated at the meeting. To be sure a few minor concessions were made, but the deputies must have gone home with a deep sense of frustration at having had thrust upon them a government wherein they were to have virtually no part in making the laws. When the townspeople learned what a fiasco the gathering had been and that the deputies had bound them to abide by laws made by another the embers of discontent glowed brighter.

The fight for representation was fanned to flame by the new laws requiring all the towns to secure a patent from the King regardless of the previous source of their title.⁷ Oyster Bay failed to comply within the designated time. Perhaps they felt that since Charles II in order to further colonial expansion had declared all purchases from the Indians to be valid title there was no necessity of getting a patent. But there were more basic reasons than even this as we shall see in a moment.

Oyster Bay's reply to the original order was answered by a letter in October 1667 from Colonel Nicolls' secretary that at the Court of Assizes to be held in two weeks' time they were to show by what title the town pretended to hold their land. Apparently Oyster Bay again failed to comply for in December Nicolls wrote that only five people in Oyster Bay had been willing to receive assurance of their lands by patent from His Royal Highness, the rest being afraid of "snares set for them and their posterity." The Governor took a surprisingly calm view of the situation offering them another chance, but he warned them that each man was bound to submit to the laws that "are or shall be made" and to bear his proportionate cost of common build-

⁶Original letter, Pennypacker Long Island Collection, East Hampton, L. I.

⁷TR., I, 660.

ings. "You do know also that no man's title to lands is pleadable in law or will hereafter be admitted in any court of this government which is not confirmed by a patent from His Royal Highness."

The town's reply states very clearly their position in the matter and its forthright tone speaks well for the solidarity of its writers. It is paraphrased for clarification: Oyster Bay January 10, 1667-8. We the town return our answer to you saying that in our late letter to Governor Nicolls' Secretary we condescended to a patent for the further confirmation of our lawful purchased lands which for fourteen years we have peaceably enjoyed free from the molestation of any power or person whatever. We also sent our deeds to be recorded in the general office in New York according to the fundamental laws made by the Governor and deputies at the General Court at Hempstead. As for the colonies oath, it is true we swore to be true to all wholesome laws that are or hereafter shall be made *if they are made by the Governor, magistrate and deputies, the said deputies being chosen and sent in by the country to join with the Governor and magistrate in making laws and assessments* for the public charge. It is well known in the country that the King, being informed that the Massachusetts colony did debar part of its subjects from just liberty due to all free-holders, commanded the colony to allow the free-holders to choose their own magistrates, military, and laws according to his letters patent; no laws to be made repugnant to the laws of England. He reserved appeals to himself lest his subjects should be overburdened by a subordinate power. And whereas the King was pleased to grant the same favor to his subjects which God hath given unto himself that is, liberty to all "tender consciences" (Quakers) as was publicly declared by you, the Governor in the open field at Gravesend. It goes against our consciences to voluntarily subject ourselves and our posterities forever unto all such laws as may be made long after the decease of the King and the Duke of York. *We*

cannot comply with such a patent which will bind us and our posterity forever to the subject of all unknown laws without exception or caution which may be imposed upon us many years after the King's and Duke's decease as before expressed. Further we say not and desire the clerk to record this as a town act.⁸

The receipt of a letter such as this certainly must have jarred the Governor and it was followed on April 11th by another carried by Captain John Underhill, who also brought a draft of the town bounds, saying that Oyster Bay was willing to receive a patent *provided that the deputies had a part in making laws* as stated in the circular calling the deputies to the original Hempstead convention. To drive this point home a copy of this circular was sent along with the other papers. If these conditions were met Oyster Bay freely condescended to secure a patent.⁹

Governor Nicolls and his council were no doubt livid on receipt of these two missives. Nothing further appears on the record until two years later on October 8th, in the record of the Court of Assizes, Southampton, Southold and Oyster Bay were named as the only towns who "upon some niceties or pretenses have hitherto delayed" to acquire their patents. These three towns were then ordered to prove their title at once and in the meantime all their deeds, grants, etc., were to be held invalid. This threat does not seem to have upset the villagers of Oyster Bay to any extent for it was seven long years later, on the 15th of October 1677, that Henry and Thomas Townsend were chosen to go to New York and actually procure the patent.¹⁰

Thus Oyster Bay became the last town on Long Island to let up for the moment in the fight for representative government; a fight which finally bore fruit six years later as we shall see.

"Taxation without representation" was not a cry born on

⁸TR., I, 33.

⁹TR., I, 40.

¹⁰TR., I, 234.

the eve of the Revolution—it had been hurled at the British crown for fully a hundred years before the Stamp Act. In March 1666 Oyster Bay complained to Governor Nicolls' council that the public rate was too high and not equitably distributed. Nicolls with admirable restraint pointed out that he got no salary whatever from the rate and in fact the common charges were 200 pounds over the taxes of the past year. In order to build up this deficit the tax for the current year was increased to one penny per pound.¹¹ In 1667 most of the towns held out on their taxes and Oyster Bay in particular was cited for having failed to pay their portion towards the building of a Sessions House for the North Riding.¹²

After Nicolls had been replaced as Governor by Francis Lovelace, Oyster Bay and several of the other towns sent a petition in 1669 in an effort to gain concessions from the new Governor. The first point was the old one about representation, asking that deputies chosen yearly by the free-holders of every town be granted the authority to assess taxes and advise in the making of the laws. This, of course, was arbitrarily denied and they were told that nothing was required of them "but obedience and submission to the laws of the government." The petition also requested that the prices of goods be pegged to prevent the city merchants from cheating the townsmen in both buying and selling; that wampum might be used as cash; that all harbors in the colony might be free ports; and that any produce brought into New York City might be admitted custom free. All these requests were denied. To be sure concessions were made, such as better ferry service to the island of Manhattan and standardizing weights and measures on the English scale, but these were of small moment.¹³

Hard on this came a special levy to repair the Palisades

¹¹Col. Doc., XIV, 574.

¹²Ibid., 602.

¹³Ibid., XIII, 631-3.

around Fort James at New York. The towns on Long Island could see no reason why they should support what to them was a purely Manhattan matter and Oyster Bay, as a Quaker community, was particularly incensed. All the towns again protested to the Court of Sessions in the West Riding and Lovelace in anger ordered all the documents publicly burned.

In 1671 the Court of Assizes directed that no wheat or corn be shipped outside of the colony without a government license and that all shipping had to clear through the New York customs. Regulations such as this were considered a restraint of trade by the villagers and Oyster Bay as a harbor port must have felt the pinch especially strongly.¹⁴ Smuggling was rife and numerous efforts were made to stamp it out and turn the revenue lost thereby into the government coffers. It was quite normal to land tobacco and rum at Oyster Bay without paying import duties at New York and attempts to place a revenue officer in the area failed as the individuals concerned all claimed the undertaking was too hazardous.¹⁵

Since the Duke's laws provided that no person should be "molested, fined or imprisoned for differing in judgment in matters of religion who professes Christianity"¹⁶ imagine the reaction of a group of Quakers when in 1675 they were ordered to pay toward the maintenance of the Ministry "beside the Usual Country Rate a Double Rate [to be] leved upon all those Townes that have not [provided] already presant Maintenance for a Minister."¹⁷

Oyster Bay contained themselves as long as they could but on September 24, 1681 it was agreed at a town meeting that Nathaniel Coles and Thomas Townsend were to go to Huntington

¹⁴TR., I, 663.

¹⁵Col. Doc., II, 720; IV, 516; XIV, 566.

¹⁶New York Historical Society Collections—1809 (New York, 1811), *The Duke's Laws*, 333.

¹⁷TR., I, 666.

the following Wednesday to join representatives from the other towns in a grievance meeting. They were to determine "what may Conduce best to oure Just libertyes Eclipsed, which was promised us and granted upon our subjecktion by governar nikall." The two representatives were empowered "to Exhibitt an Adress by waye of petition to the governar and the Court of Asizes in behalfe of our towne."¹⁸ A petition was drawn up and presented to the Council on October 5th. Hempstead, Huntington and Oyster Bay were held by the Court of Assizes to have illegally assembled themselves and the deputies ordered to return home, there to remain quiet until further orders from his Majesty.¹⁹ Oyster Bay flamed into action and on November 4, the following was hurled at the Governor:

To tthe Comandar in Cheffe in new york: tthe Answare of the towne of oyster Baye, when the five men which ware the Representatives off long island have Satesfaction wee are willing to make payment of whatt Is Justly due as to the publick. In ackted by the towne of oyster Baye this 4th of November 1681 By ordar of the towne. Signed Mathias Harvey.²⁰

The same year the Grand Jury presented the want of a general assembly as an insupportable grievance to the Court of Assizes and the situation had deteriorated to such an extent that Captain John Youngs, high sheriff of Long Island, was selected to draft a petition to the Duke of York. One was accordingly drawn, approved and transmitted, and appears to have been favorably received for instructions were soon after forwarded to the Governor to convene a general assembly on his arrival in the colony. William Penn advised the Duke of York as to the reforms which the province required.

Thomas Dongan, the new Governor, immediately after his

¹⁸TR., I, 245.

¹⁹New York Historical Society Collections—1912 (New York, 1912), *Court of Assize Records*, 17, 25.

²⁰TR., I, 247.

arrival in the summer of 1683 issued orders to the sheriffs to convene the free-holders of the province in their several towns to elect deputies to meet him in a general assembly. At length on the 17th of October 1683 the representatives of the people met and themselves established a Charter of Liberties giving New York a place by the side of Virginia and Massachusetts.²¹ Thus we see that Oyster Bay played a major role in bringing about peaceably what the colonies as a whole were forced to achieve by force of arms a hundred years later.

THE DUTCH RETURN

Early in the summer of 1673 Dutch warships appeared off Manhattan Island and catching the British completely unaware they soon regained control of New York. The Dutch council of war under Commander Cornelis Evertson ordered all the Long Island towns to send deputies at once together with their constable staves and English flags as token of surrender.²² The minutes of the Dutch Council tell us that the Oyster Bay deputies appeared and delivered one flag and one staff. The delegates from several Long Island towns then presented a petition with regard to their rights and privileges which was granted.²³

Oyster Bay, however, was still not satisfied and on the following day they sent in their own petition somewhat on these terms: That they had never been under the Dutch government and, therefore, had never had occasion to make any agreement with that nation about the rights and privileges given or allowed because a number in the town "schruple" in taking an oath or training, or being forced to maintain a minister not of their judgment and, therefore, they desired liberty in such cases relating to conscience as the Dutch had promised. Oyster Bay was still smarting under what they felt had been the perfidy of

²¹Thompson, I, 232; TR., I, 267.

²²Col. Doc., II, 572.

²³Ibid., 581.

Governor Nicolls in not fulfilling the letter of his proclamation regarding representative government. This petition was allowed on August 23, 1673.²⁴

On August 31, Nicholas Wright, Thomas Townsend and Nathaniel Coles were elected schepens of Oyster Bay and sworn in on September 6th. On September 12th the magistrates were sworn in and three Dutchmen selected to administer the oath of allegiance to Oyster Bay and the towns to the eastward.²⁵ Realizing they were treading on thin ice the Dutch granted almost any request and Oyster Bay thankfully acknowledged the "freedoms and privileges not to be forced to carry arms against their own nation with further promise to demean and comport themselves like loyal subjects."²⁶

Captain Kynf, who headed the Dutch commission taking the oath, had a rather unfortunate time of it. On October 19th he reported that Oyster Bay was the only town east of Hempstead to take the oath of allegiance.²⁷ For the second time in ten years the hopes of the town that they had found a government which would suit them and in which they could fit themselves rose to new heights . . . their joy did not last long; within nine months the British were back in control in New York.

The one person in the town who apparently could not fit himself to the Dutch regime was Samuel Forman who entered New York without permission and proceeded "to make a great noise and uproar among the public streets . . . and, moreover, presume to come into the church on the last Sabbath and there, in full meeting, during Divine service, to make great outcry, abusing, with great levity, the word of God, and blaspheming his Holy Name." For this Forman was severely whipped with rods and banished forever out of the province.²⁸ Of course, this

²⁴Ibid., 581.

²⁵Ibid., 592, 620.

²⁶Ibid., 632.

²⁷Ibid., 638.

²⁸Ibid., 705.

sentence was not promulgated since the Dutch lost control of New York. There is no clue as to whether Forman's disturbance could be attributed to liquor or Quakerism.

CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE

During the last thirty-five years of the 17th century Oyster Bay grew rapidly and developed a character which was not to change materially until after the Revolution. Its appearance was that of an average farming community. The houses were still grouped in the town spot between Mill Hill on the west, the Cove on the east, on streets which were either a sea of mud or churned to dust by horses and wagons. The whole was surrounded on the land side by a fence with three gates in it on the main streets.²⁹ This served to keep the cattle and swine out of the town spot where they would have been only a nuisance, ruining the water for household purposes and rooting in the gardens. Sheep were allowed to roam inside the town fence, but geese were prohibited as they drove the sheep into the woods where they fell easy prey to the wolves.³⁰

The houses, as far as we can determine, were still of the salt box shape and regular one- or two-story rectangular structures, clapboard sided and for the most part thatch roofed. The inflammable character of the roofs was acknowledged by a town order that every townsman must provide a ladder of sufficient length to reach to his ridge pole.³¹

Inside the houses the cooking, of course, was still done over the open fire, the utensils being either iron, brass, or copper pots. Food was served in pewter or wooden dishes depending on the financial status of the family. The beds, at least for the head of the family, were the large four-poster type with a canopy and curtains which tended to keep out the cold winter

²⁹TR., I, 227.

³⁰TR., I, 268.

³¹TR., I, 216.

drafts making a night's sleep under the goose down quilts more enjoyable.³² A clear picture of the type of articles used in a household may be gleaned from the inventories of estates included in appendix four.

There was little need for a formal education in a day when it was far more important to know how to plant crops and rear livestock. An acquaintance with "reding, writing and casting Accountts" classed any man as one of the better educated. Such instruction was given in the home during the long winter evenings either by the parents or someone such as Enoch Flower, a weayer, who lived in the Youngs' house and taught the children in return for board and lodging.³³ A few in the sixteen seventies learned the fundamentals from Schoolmaster Webb.³⁴

It should not be assumed that the village was backward. Mills and merchants appeared at a very early date as we have already seen. As early as 1672 the "old" brick kiln located on the northeast corner of East Main Street and South Street is mentioned,³⁵ and by 1680 a brick kiln had been established on Hog Island (Center Island).³⁶ Most of this brick was used for building chimneys or cellars, although Richard Harcutt owned a brick house in 1696.³⁷ That lime for the mortar was obtained from oyster shells accounts for the absence of most of the Indian shell heaps today.³⁸

Perhaps the most important artisan of these early days was the blacksmith for everything made out of iron had to be fabricated on the spot. The colonies were too remote for things to be imported easily from England at a reasonable expense and

³²TR., I, 412.

³³TR., I, 146; Contract between Enoch Flower and Samuel Youngs among miscellaneous papers of the Youngs family on loan to Hofstra College, Hempstead, N. Y.

³⁴TR., I, 235.

³⁵TR., I, 78, 585.

³⁶TR., I, 141.

³⁷TR., II, 285.

³⁸TR., II, 380.

all towns sought to acquire a blacksmith early in their existence. The first one in Oyster Bay was John Thompson who arrived in 1668. He was soon forced to leave town for breach of contract and was subsequently followed by a succession of other blacksmiths.

Among those who worked with wood it is difficult to determine whether they were carpenters, joiners, or shipwrights. In 1667 William Frost, living at Matinecock, was designated as a shipwright followed in later years by several others. The first carpenters, as such, were John Townsend in 1661 and John Robinson in 1676.

As early as 1668 a fulling mill was established at Mosquito Cove where homespun was cleaned and worked into material suitable for making garments. The housewives clothed their families until Thomas Gatchel arrived in town some ten years later. The rest of the citizen's bodily wants were supplied by a cordwainer (shoe maker) and a hatter who appeared about 1680. John Townsend, Jr., and John Weeks became a hatter and a weaver respectively in 1686.

Until 1682 the only doctor in the vicinity was Jonas Wood of Huntington who was licensed to practice "chirurgery" by the General Court of Assizes in 1677. His qualifications seem to have been merely that he had practiced several cures without too high a mortality rate.³⁹ The first doctor to settle in Oyster Bay was Simon Cooper from New Jersey who received his town grant in 1681.⁴⁰

One of the most interesting people in the town during this period was William Bradford who, in 1725, inaugurated the "New York Gazette"—the first newspaper to be published in the colony. He was born in Leicester, England in 1663 and came to America around 1682. Three years later a letter from George Fox to one of the Wrights in Oyster Bay introduced Bradford

³⁹Col. Doc., XIV, 730.

⁴⁰TR., I, 353.

giving him his first contact with the village. He worked in Philadelphia until 1693 when because of his printing policies he was forced to move to New York where he became official printer to the Governor.

In 1698 he bought seven acres of land in Oyster Bay from Job Wright for six pounds sterling.⁴¹ The following year he bought twenty-five acres from Henry Townsend, Sr., located west of the Mill Pond and south of the road which now goes over Mill Hill—there he subsequently built the first bolting mill in the town.⁴² In 1700 he bought a house and lot on the east end of Oyster Bay which at one time belonged to Thomas Youngs. In this deed he is styled as being “a merchant of Oyster Bay.”⁴³ For the next three years Bradford continued to pick up other pieces of land. Whether or not he ever made his permanent home in Oyster Bay is debatable, although Mr. Pennypacker styles him as the first “summer resident” of the town. There are indications that the town bought its record books from him during this period but having a going business in New York City it is dubious that he was ever more than a part-time resident here.

The welfare and recreation of the town was always before the members of these early English colonies, and in any of them it was not long before a “pub” or ordinary was established. Perhaps in Oyster Bay the process was hastened as a means of control by the case of Moses Forman. In 1674 he got to drinking a little too much and finding himself “not capable to deal with any man or trade for the good of myself and family being of weak capacity” he appointed the officers of the town as overseers of his estate to protect his wife and children. He further agreed not to make a sale of over five shillings value at any time without the consent of one of the overseers.⁴⁴

⁴¹Pennypacker, 5.

⁴²TR., II, 418.

⁴³TR., II, 491.

⁴⁴TR., II, 330.

Three years later, at a town meeting, it was ordered that for the encouragement of an ordinary land would be granted on the east side of South Street north of Main Street to anyone who would keep and maintain a public house. A provision was included for the confiscation of any drink retailed to any person or persons other than that sold by the ordinary.⁴⁵ Nothing came of this scheme but in 1683 Caleb Wright was appointed as "Ordinary Keeper" for the town and all persons were required to forbear "tapping any sort of drink by rattalle [retail] but as the law directs."⁴⁶

While we have seen that there was shipping in some form from a very early date we find no evidence of the actual construction of ships until 1677 when it was ordered at a town meeting that "no vessel shall be built within this town above 3 Tunns for sale to any person or persons not inhabiting within the town."⁴⁷ In 1681 John Newman was granted a home lot and four acres of meadow in the Cove for a boatyard. However, the meadow reverted to the town for not being improved as specified in the deed.⁴⁸ In 1693 Pierre Berton, a merchant of Oyster Bay, sold to Pierre Duga, a mariner of New York and Berton's son-in-law, a half interest in the sloop TRUE LOVE lying at the dock in Oyster Bay "where she was lately built" with the masts, rigging, boat and one suit of sails, two cables and anchors.⁴⁹ This is the only specific record of a boat being built at Oyster Bay. Two years after the launching of the TRUE LOVE Thomas Youngs opened up a rope yard near his house at the Cove. From the foregoing it can be seen that while information is meager and scattered there are indications that shipbuilding and shipping was one of the major occupations of the village.

⁴⁵TR., I, 237.

⁴⁶TR., I, 268.

⁴⁷TR., I, 236.

⁴⁸TR., I, 242.

⁴⁹TR., II, 148.

CHAPTER IV

Religious Growth

THE QUAKERS

THE HISTORY OF RELIGION IN OYSTER BAY IS UNIQUE. ONE of the strongest drives for forming new colonies at this time was that of dissatisfaction with the religious picture in the colony that they were leaving. That being the case we would expect to find a strong religious community built up in the new colony from its very inception. It is true that the Reverend William Leverich was one of the original proprietors of Oyster Bay; however, we know that he never stayed in town going out instead to preach among the Indians and settling shortly thereafter in Huntington. Thus, Oyster Bay was left for many years without an established minister.

Outside of an occasional itinerant minister preaching a sermon in Oyster Bay, there was no established Episcopal Church in the town until around 1704 when Oyster Bay, as part of St. George's parish in Hempstead, received the ministrations of the new clergyman from that parish. This would make it appear that Oyster Bay until the 18th century was somewhat of a godless town. However, a further search into the records discloses a considerable amount of activity among the Society of Friends, or Quakers, in this area.

In 1624 George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends, was born in Drayton, Leicestershire, England, where he began

preaching in 1642. Fox himself did not come to this country until 1672, but a number of years before this Quakers had arrived and in the manner of itinerant preachers held meetings at numerous parts of Long Island and in some sections of New England. As early as 1656, and perhaps even in the previous year, Quakers had arrived in Boston—one boat load of eight arrived on August 27th. However, when their religion was discovered they were thrown in prison and deported on the next ship out.

The following year on August 1, 1657, eleven Quaker missionaries, under the leadership of Robert Hodgson, arrived in the vessel WOODHOUSE in command of Robert Fowler at the port of New York.¹ There were eleven in this group including most of those deported from Boston the previous year. In September Hodgson held a meeting in the house of Henry Townsend at Jamaica for which the latter was arrested and fined. This is the first instance on the record of a future resident of Oyster Bay being in trouble for his Quaker leanings.²

In the same year Christopher Holder and John Copeland arrived in the town of Sandwich, and Mr. Pennypacker of East Hampton believes that the Oyster Bay Quakers developed their religion through that contact with former friends.³ This same Richard Hodgson is responsible for what is believed to be the first Quaker meeting in America held at Lady Moody's house, Gravesend, Long Island in 1657.⁴ In 1659 another Quaker missionary, John Taylor, in his Journal states that there were meetings in Oyster Bay and several other places.⁵

The three Wright brothers in Oyster Bay were one of the earliest families to endorse the Quaker teachings wholeheartedly.

¹John Cox, Jr., *Quakerism in the City of New York*, (New York, 1930), 9.

²James Bowden, *History of The Society of Friends in America*, (London, 1850-54), 317.

³Pennypacker, 4.

⁴Flint, 113.

⁵Bowden, 322.

In 1661 Mary Wright and her sister Hannah, who at that time was not over ten years old, were two of twenty-eight Quakers jailed in Boston for telling the court to lay aside "carnal weapons" and cease slaughtering the Indians. Hannah, being a minor, was not tried but Mary was suspected and tried for witchcraft.⁶ She was, however, convicted of Quakerism and sentenced to banishment, after which she made several other gospel mission trips through New England—one in 1664 and another in 1667.⁷

Hannah Wright in 1665 made a similar visit to Boston to warn the magistrate to spill no more innocent blood and it took John Richbell, Oyster Bay's first merchant, to request her liberty and get her out of Boston safely.⁸ The third Wright sister, Lydia appears on the record in 1677 when she accompanied a Margaret Brewster, who was dressed in sackcloth and ashes and had blackened her face, to an Episcopal meeting in Boston. They were both arrested and tried along with three other Quakers. Margaret Brewster was sentenced to be tied to a cart's tail, stripped to the waist and paraded through the town and, thereafter, to receive twenty lashes. The others, including Lydia, were only to be tied to the cart during the parade. From the court records we know that Lydia spoke with calm assurance and mature thought for one so young in years. Juggins, a Magistrate, was railing against her—"There is but one God, and you do not worship that God that we worship." Lydia replied, "I believe thou speakest truth, for if you worship the God which we worship, you would not persecute His people."⁹ Apparently all the three Wright girls were young ladies of great faith and strength of character. In 1680 Lydia Wright was still travelling and preaching the word.¹⁰

⁶Bowden, 337; Joseph Besse, *Sufferings of the Quakers*, (London, 1753), II, 224.

⁷Bowden, 337.

⁸Pennypacker, 4.

⁹Besse, II, 260.

¹⁰Bowden, 337.

John Burnyeat landed in New York in 1671 and went at once to the half-yearly meeting at Oyster Bay on May 23rd to deliver a letter from George Fox in England addressed to Samuel Andrews and other residents of the village. With this letter was a copy of Fox's "Paper of Advice," the basis for the discipline of the Society, and an unbound book about eleven by seven inches in which the minutes were to be kept. The earliest minute of a meeting held in America was written in this book on that date.¹¹ Bowden, referring to Burnyeat's Journal, says that, "The first notice of the existence of a meeting for discipline, among the Friends of Long Island, is that of the one in question but there is good reason to believe, that this meeting had been established for some years prior to this date." Burnyeat then spent the summer traveling over Long Island and parts of New England preaching the Quaker doctrine and returned in October for the next half-yearly meeting in Oyster Bay.¹² While the above minute was the first official one recorded by the Quakers on Long Island, there is a record on October 30, 1663 of the marriage of Samuel Andrews and Mary Wright at "the usual meeting house of Anthony Wright in Oyster Bay." This is sound evidence for Bowden's claim that the meeting had been in existence for a number of years before 1671.

Early in 1672 George Fox himself sailed to America and on May 17th was held one of the most famous Quaker meetings in this country—perhaps the first that the Father of the Society of Friends held in the New World. Several hundred yards south of what is now the junction of the Bayville Road and West Main Street, located on the west side of the road, is a rock set a few feet back in the woods—the site is now marked by a New York State marker. On this rock George Fox, accompanied by John Burnyeat, George Patterson and Robert Winters, preached at

¹¹Cox, 190; Pennypacker, 4.

¹²Bowden, 329.

the half-yearly meeting in Oyster Bay. The meeting lasted four days. To quote from Fox's Journal:

The first and second days we had public meetings for worship, to which people of all sorts came; on the third day were men's and women's meetings, wherein the affairs of the church were taken care of. Here we met with some bad spirits, who had run out from truth into prejudice, contention, and opposition to the order of truth, and to Friends therein. These had been very troublesome to Friends in their meetings there and thereabouts formerly, and likely would have been so now, but I would not suffer the service of our man's and woman's meetings to be interrupted and hindered by their cavals. I let them know that if they had anything to object against the order of truth which we were in, we would give them a meeting another day on purpose.

This was done on the fourth day and most of the backsliders were re-established in the Society.¹³

George Fox, James Lancaster, Christopher Holder and William Edmundson returned to Oyster Bay very early on August 7, 1672 and held a "very large" meeting. Judging from Fox's use of "very large" in other places, there must have been two hundred or more people present. No doubt it was an inspiring sight to see this large gathering grouped under the trees before what is known as Fox's Rock listening to the inspired leader of their faith.

The way of these Quakers was not always smooth—in a letter of October 10, 1675 Patience Storey wrote to Thomas and Alice Curwen, all of them being itinerant Quaker preachers, of the following meeting in Oyster Bay.

We are, as it were, a song among a wild generation; and those ranting spirits are much as they were when ye were here; they came in the like manner ranting, roaring, singing and dancing to our meetings; and it is harder to bear cause it casts stumbling blocks in the way of the simple; for some of the world think they

¹³George Fox, *Journal*, Wilson Armisted (ed.), 2 vols. (7th ed., London, 1852), II, 110.

are of us, and call them quakers; saying, "Look where they differ among themselves!" These ranters were very wicked at Oyster Bay the last meeting; when the meeting was near ended, my husband was taken violent sick with a vomiting and gripes; some of them hearing of it very glad, and said to me I should lose my right eye and my right arm; and came near the door where we were, and where my husband lay sick; and cried, "Wo, wo, wo, to that damned Storey and Jezebel his wife."¹⁴

These "ranters" referred to in this quotation were a rather undisciplined group who believed in free expression of any and all emotions. They whooped, writhed and carried on in meetings somewhat in the manner of some of our smaller religious sects today.

On February 12, 1677 Thomas and Alice Curwen sent a letter to Friends in New York and New England asking that it be forwarded with love to Matthew Pryor and family, Mary Willie and family, Alice Crabbe and family, and John Dickinson and family. This makes these people Quakers.¹⁵

Apparently the Curwens were a pretty shrewd pair—at a meeting in Flushing in 1677 a Constable Noyes and Benjamin Gibbs appeared with a warrant to break up the meeting. They were asked to read the warrant which said "They were to bring in every person found at a Quaker's meeting." Alice Curwen jumped up and said, "This warrant takes not hold on us; we are the meeting; this warrant is to bring such persons as found at a Quaker's meeting." This gave the Constable pause but then he said, "Come you are blasphemers; we will not stand to see the devil worshipped." At this Alice Curwen asked Gibbs what he had heard the Quakers say and he had to admit that no one had said a word of prayer since he came into the room. However, Alice Curwen was still taken to jail.¹⁶

¹⁴Alice Curwen, *A Relation of the Labour, Travail, and Suffering of Alice Curwen*, (Date and place unknown), 40.

¹⁵Curwen, 17.

¹⁶Curwen, 50.

On October 15, 1672 Anthony Wright bequeathed to Alice Crabbe, Hannah Wright, Samuel Andrews, and Mary Andrews, a lot six poles square on the northeast corner of his home lot in Oyster Bay for use as a Quaker burial place and also forty square feet on the southeast corner for a meeting house.¹⁷ Samuel Andrews and John Feake contracted to build it for twenty pounds.¹⁸ This was the first house built for that purpose on Long Island. A committee was appointed in 1693 to take down, sell or dispose of this meeting house as they should see fit and whether a second one was ever built for a number of years is a question for in 1722 Fothergill in his Journal mentions that a large meeting was held in a barn.¹⁹

At a later date the two corner lots, granted by Anthony Wright to the Quakers, one for the meeting house and one for the burial ground, were thrown together on the northeast corner of his land and a meeting house was built there. This one survived until in the 1920's when it was used by Mr. Tappen as a bicycle repair store and later by Peter Morrison as a feed store. It was torn down some time around 1940.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The history of the Episcopal Church during the first fifty years of Oyster Bay is practically nil. It is possible that William Leverich, who for some of that time was located in Huntington, may have preached here occasionally or perhaps some of the people from Oyster Bay went to Huntington to attend services.

Various attempts to establish the church were made. In 1665 one of the Duke's laws specified that there should be built in each parish a church capable of holding 200 persons. However, little was done until the Colonial Assembly of 1693 passed an act levying a tax to maintain two ministers in Queens County

¹⁷TR., I, 687.

¹⁸Pennypacker, 4.

¹⁹John Fothergill, *Journal*, (Place and date unknown), 129.

—one for Jamaica and the adjoining towns and farms, and one for Hempstead and its surrounding areas including Oyster Bay.²⁰ The reaction of Oyster Bay to this tax is found in the Town Records: "This Day the Town mett together in order to a Late Act of Assembly for setling two Ministers in the County but nothing done about it but made returne, that it was a thing against their Judgment therefore could act nothing about it."²¹

Judging from this it is probably safe to assume that the Episcopalian faith was not sufficiently strong in Oyster Bay for them to feel justified in paying a tax for its support.

The first recorded Episcopal service in Oyster Bay was not held until September 14, 1702 when George Keefe arrived and was hospitably entertained at the house of Edward White whose family he baptized. Keefe had formerly been a Quaker and also for that matter had Edward White and his wife. He appeared twice more in 1702 and several times in 1703, each time staying at the Whites, preaching, and later baptizing several more of the townspeople. Of the religious status of the village at this time Keefe wrote:

There had scarce been any profession of the Christian religion among the people of that town Oyster Bay. They have scarce any notion of religion but Quakerism. The Quakers had formerly a meeting there, but many of them who lived in that town, became followers of Thomas Chase and were called, Chase's Crew, who set up a new sort of Quakerism and among other vile principles, they condemned marriage and said it was of the devil.²²

In April 1703 Keefe wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as follows: "The main thing of importance I have at present to write to you is to tell you of the extreme desire that people have in several parts where I

²⁰Rev. William H. Moore, *History of St. George's Church, Hempstead*, (New York, 1881). 176.

²¹TR., II, 359.

²²George Keith, *Journal of Travels*, Coll. of the Protestant Epis. Hist. Soc., (New York, 1851), 27, 44.

have travelled to have the Church of England ministers sent to them." Listed among the other places is Oyster Bay. In 1704 an account of the state of the church presented at a meeting of the clergy in New York City mentions Oyster Bay as having no church but a considerable number of people desirous of a minister.²³

In December of the same year the Rev. John Thomas arrived in Hempstead as the first Rector of St. George's Episcopal parish which included Hempstead and Oyster Bay. He wrote back to the Society that the inhabitants of Queens County were generally independent and those that were not so were Quakers or had no professed religion at all.²⁴ As late as 1722 Jenny wrote saying that there were two churches in his parish; one at Hempstead and a "very small one" at Oyster Bay where the congregation was increasing but was as yet very small. The religious in his parish were designated as "a very few Presbyterians in Hempstead, and rather fewer Baptists; at Oyster Bay more of the church, more than both together of the Quakers. But most of all Latitudinarians, who run from one congregation to another and hold to that religion whose preacher pleases them most."²⁵

A consideration of the evidence makes it very clear that during the early years of Oyster Bay the Quaker faith was the only one of any strength. Perhaps for this reason the village was characterized by a religious tolerance which at that period was exceptional. With the Church in New England harassing Quakers on all sides and the Dutch doing their best to get them out of their lands, Oyster Bay at a very early date became a haven for members of that faith. Later on the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, and even Dutch Reformed churches made their appearance in the town and the inhabitants went through a trying period of indecision as evidenced by the "Latitudinarians" mentioned in Jenny's letter.

²³O'Callaghan, III, 115.

²⁴Moore, 32.

²⁵Moore, 57.

Appendix I

A THOROUGH SEARCH FOR MAPS SHOWING THE LAYOUT OF THE early village of Oyster Bay has proven extremely disappointing. The earliest was made by Colonel John Graves Simcoe while stationed in the village during the Revolution.

The next was drawn in 1833 by William J. Youngs and is the earliest to give the names of some of the land owners. The original is owned by Mrs. Sarah Hoppin of Oyster Bay.

A map was copyrighted in 1859 by H. F. Walling. It covers Kings and Queens Counties and the original measures 59 x 61 inches. The copy reproduced was printed in Philadelphia.

Beers published an atlas of Queens County in 1873 showing in detail the owner of each house. All four of these maps are reproduced in Appendix V.

In drawing the map presented herewith the author has used several sources of information. The most valuable was a volume entitled *THE MEMORIAL OF THE TOWNSEND BROTHERS* written during the Civil War by a female member of the Townsend family as a means of recording some of the family history and also of occupying the idle hours while the men folk were away fighting. The sources used in compiling this work were the Oyster Bay Town records and also conversations with the older

residents of the village. One of these was Chancellor McCoun who, at the time the *Townsend Memorial* was written, was approaching ninety. When one realizes that Chancellor McCoun could have talked to people who knew the setup in the village not too long after 1700, a good deal of credence may be given to the material in this book.

The next most important sources are the Town Records themselves where the numerous deeds selling land back and forth give one many hints as to the sizes and locations of some of these lots. It is extremely difficult, in some cases, however, to trace the title accurately as in those early days the locations were designated very vaguely. Other sources include a few old surveys plus considerable leg work and personal checking on the part of the author. The lot boundaries as drawn must of necessity be only approximate.

The "town spot" or "splot" as it was sometimes called extended from the mill pond east to Lot 47 as indicated in the map on page 62 and as far south as the head of South Street at the junction with Berry Hill Road. Main and South Streets were the first laid out. The "back street" (Lexington Avenue) was opened shortly thereafter and soon following that was the street that now leads up through Poverty Hollow (Mill River Road). A good many years later what is now called Larrabee Avenue was opened, at first being named Oyster Lane and later Quogue Lane. There was a road from the Main Street to the water farther west but the formation of the pond and dam and the subsequent changes in them (the pond was originally much smaller) make it impossible to determine localities in the immediate neighborhood with precision. Lot No. 5 for instance as originally laid out was no doubt mostly flooded when the mill dam was built. East of that there was not nearly so much difficulty except in a few cases.

The first lots were laid out as six acres each and subse-

quent ones were mostly five acres. In 1683 a number of three acre lots were granted (TR.,I,263).¹

The shape of the lots can only be guessed at, but the fact that an acre was a specific shape forty rods by four rods plus the way they fit together only in certain ways indicates that the boundaries as drawn must be approximately correct in most cases.

Many of the lots tend to increase slightly in acreage as they are traced down through the years. This may be attributed to the fact that originally the eighteen foot rod was used. This would make a six acre lot include a larger area which, when measured later with the sixteen and a half foot rod, would appear as over six acres.

It was customary in transferring land title to go through a ceremony in which a piece of turf and a twig were handed over to the new owner in token of surrender of the land and everything growing thereon (TR.,I,238).

All dates have been corrected to the new style, or Gregorian, calender, which was officially adopted in 1752.

LOT NO. 1

The Townsend Memorial names this lot as being the westernmost on the north side of what is now Main Street, putting it somewhere near the swamp below the Mill Pond. It is described as belonging to Richard Latting. No evidence of such a lot may be found in the town records.

There is a lot which belonged to first William Crocker then Ann Crocker his widow sometime prior to 1660. She sold it to Richard Latting who sold it to Samuel Andrews. The location is impossible to determine and the author is certain that the land here designated as Lot 1 went to Henry Townsend in a grant from the Town in 1661.

¹Hereafter all references will appear in the body of the text. The Oyster Bay Town Records will be abbreviated to "TR" and the Townsend Memorial to "TM."

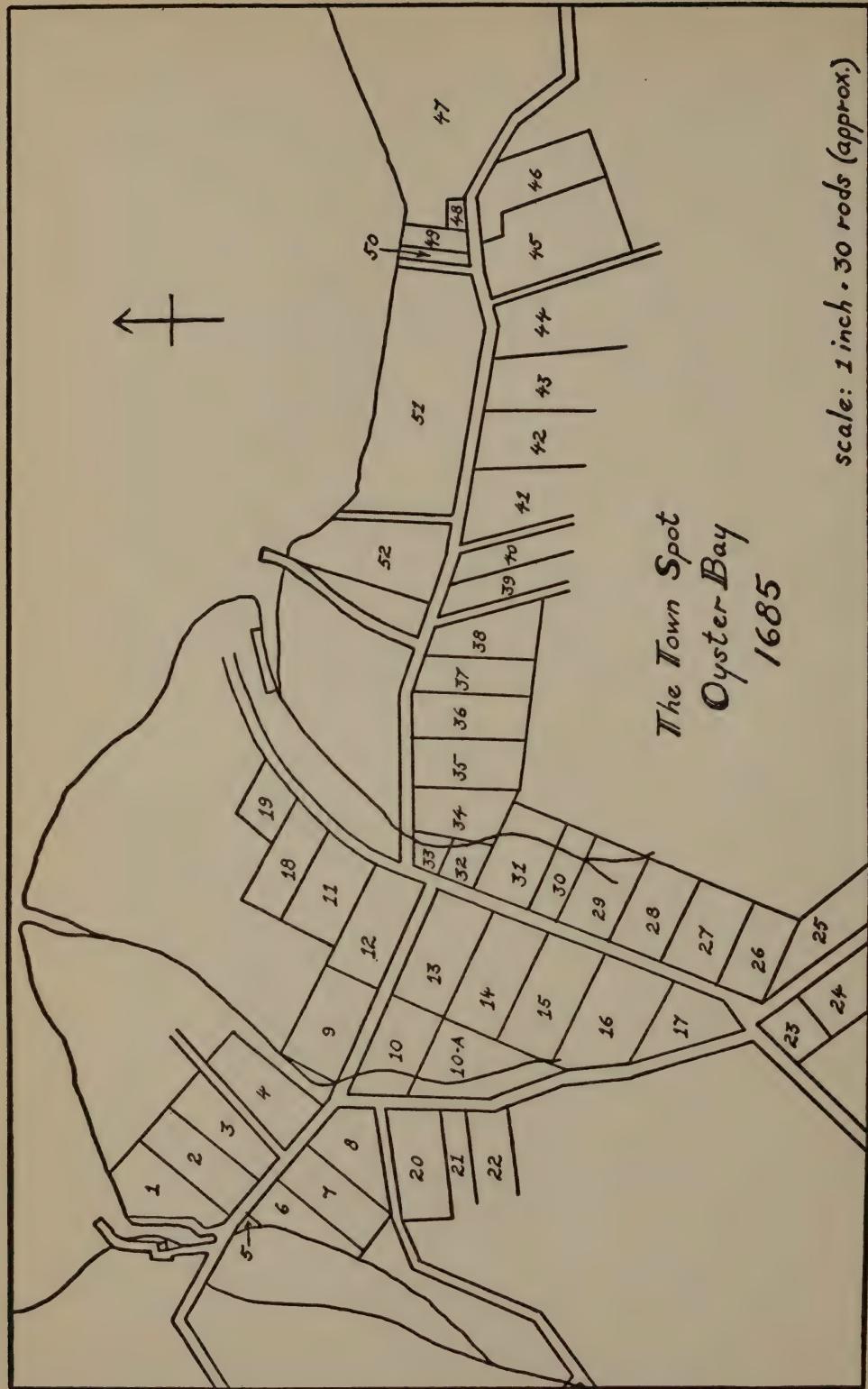


Figure 1.

LOT NO. 2

The original mill grant of 1661 gives this lot to Henry Townsend and locates it as bordered on the east by Henry Disbrow and on the west by Anthony Wright's meadow (Lot 1). This meadow later in the same deed is also granted to Henry Townsend giving him what must be Lots 1 and 2 since it definitely states that there is only a highway of two poles width between this meadow and the Mill Stream, thus placing Henry Townsend's land directly against the Mill Stream.

The town had long planned to build a mill in this area, for in the mill grant of 1661 this stream was called the "Mill River" and the lot was referred to as the "Mill Lot" (TR.,I,40). Perhaps, although no record exists, attempts had been made to find someone to build a mill here before (TR.,I,40).

LOT NO. 3

The earliest owner on record is Henry Disbrow. On the 14th of November 1661 he sold his lot, with a house on it, to John Dickinson, Sr., and moved to Hempstead. It is styled as being two-thirds of a ten acre lot. This may indicate that he had two of the original five acre lots (TR.,I,162 and Hempstead TR.,I,142, 239).

In 1662 John Dickinson sold to James Cock of Setauket (TR.,I,28). In 1669 James Cock sold this same two-thirds of a ten acre lot to Henry Townsend (TR.,I,104). This means that at that time Henry Townsend owned all the land from the Mill Stream to what later became Quogue Lane (Larrabee Avenue). The deed from James Cock for Lot No. 3 was immediately signed over to "Mill" John Townsend, son of Henry—so that in 1669 John became the owner of Lot No. 3.

The town records record a grant to Henry Townsend on April 1, 1681 for a six acre tract on the hill west of the mill

pond (TR.,I,240). Here he built a new house, leaving his old one to his son, Henry junior. In 1684 Henry Townsend, Sr. conveyed to Henry Townsend, Jr., the meadow lying "between the lain by the mill and the three runs" and his (Henry Jr.'s) house plot—the south end of it bordered by the street (TR.,I,169).

LOT NO. 4

Peter Wright traded with John Hincksman for his lot sometime prior to 1658 (TM.,p.53). This might indicate that this was Peter Wright's original lot. The next conveyance on record was John Hincksman selling to John Dickinson in 1660 (TM.,p.53) for 3 pounds in broadcloth at 18 shillings per yard and 20 shillings in liquor to be given to Oyster Bay. The next conveyance is John Dickinson to his wife Elizabeth who in turn conveyed it to Jobus Dickinson, her youngest son, Dec. 10, 1691 (TM.,p.54). Jobus in turn deeded the lot to Joseph Dickinson, the husband of Rose Townsend, and Joseph in turn deeded it to his grandsons Townsend and Henry Dickinson. Townsend and Henry sold the lot to Daniel Parrish in 1757 (TM.,p.54 and TR.,VI,221).

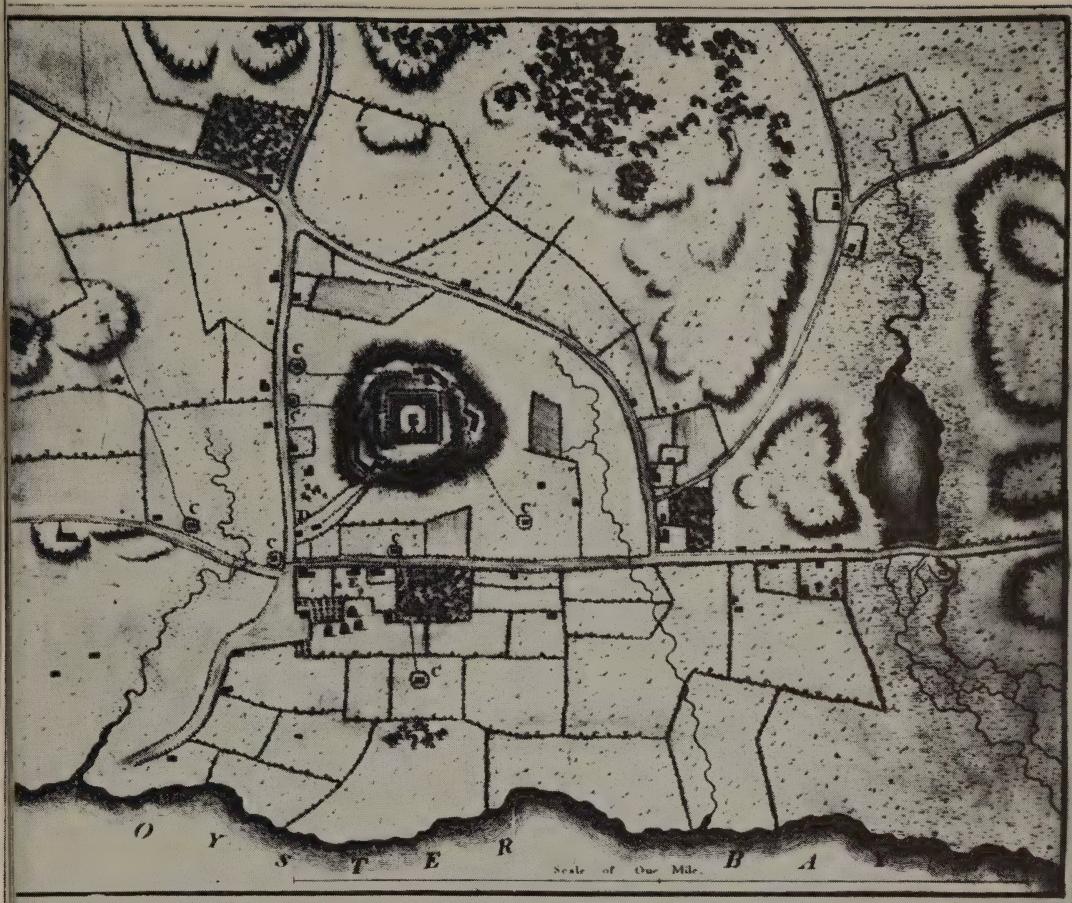
LOT NO. 5

Richard Harcutt deeded a lot to his son Daniel in 1680 (TR.,I,123). There is some doubt whether this deed refers to this lot No. 5.

LOT NO. 6

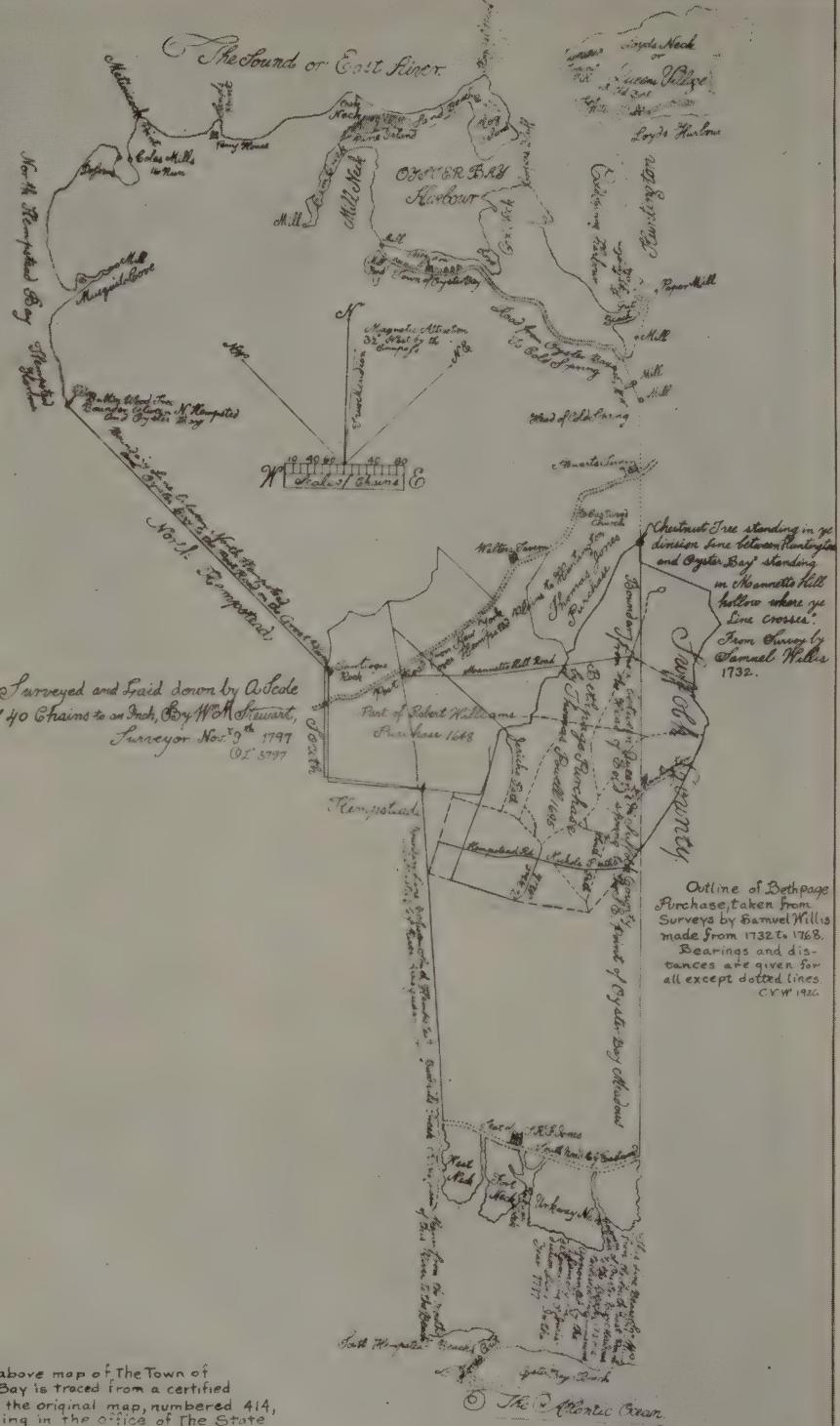
John Washburn sold this lot to Jonas Halstead (TM.,p.52) and it is known at the time he sold it there was a house on it which John himself had built. Washburn apparently moved to Hempstead for there are numerous mentions of him in the Hempstead records. He died there by August 1668 (Hempstead TR.,I,p.70).

The next sale on the records was Jonas Halstead to Richard



PLAN of OYSTER BAY,
as fortified by the
QUEEN'S RANGERS.

Figure 2



The above map of The Town of Oyster Bay is traced from a certified copy of the original map, numbered 414, remaining in the Office of The State Engineer and Surveyor at Albany N.Y.
Traced, copied and reduced to the scale, of 120 chains, or 12 miles - 1 inch, by C. Victor Wilson, C.E., 1872-26.

Figure 3

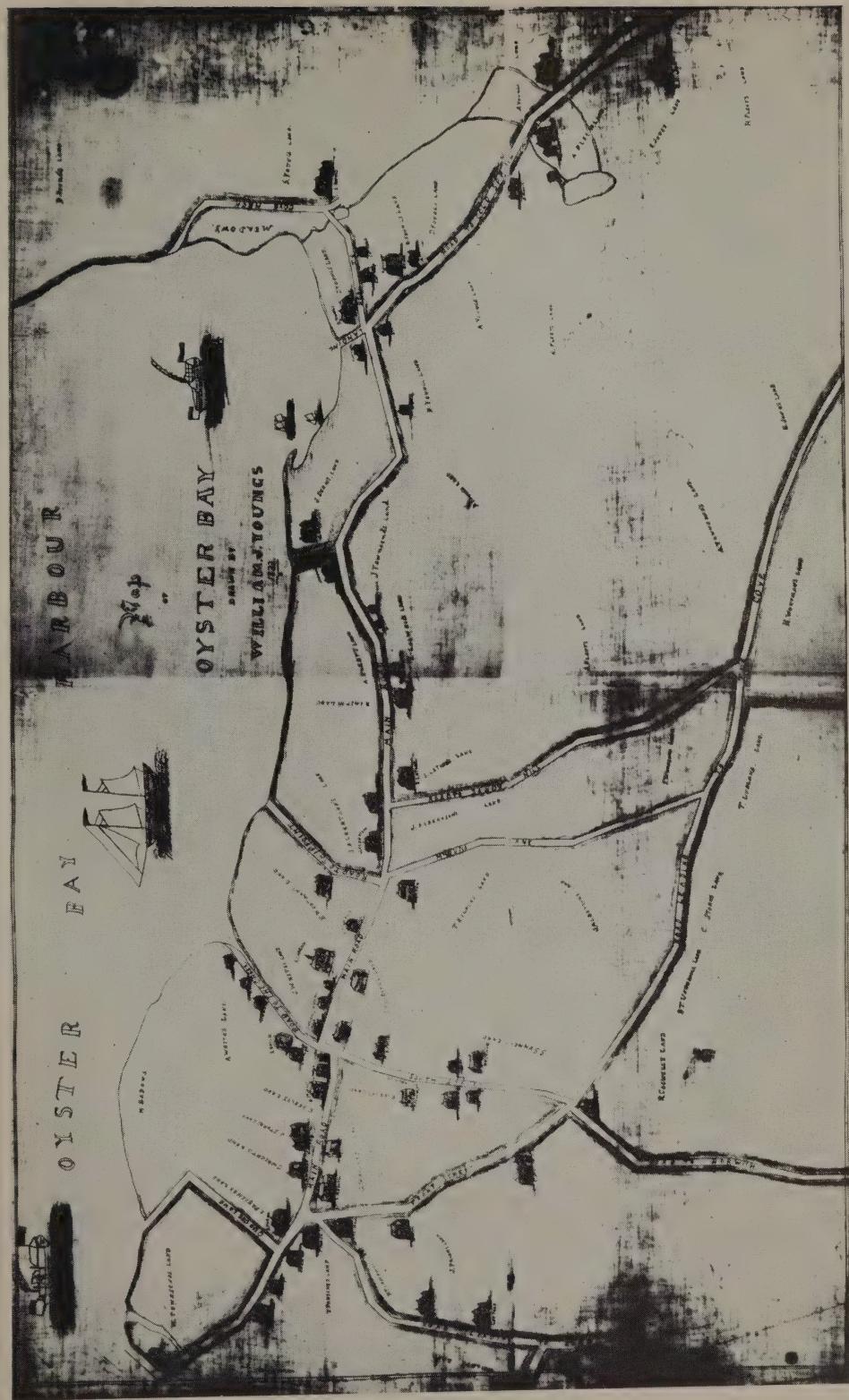


Figure 4



Figure 5

Harcutt in 1667 (TR.,I,16). Richard Harcutt then deeded the house and lot to Daniel Harcutt in 1680 (TR.,I,123). Daniel sold to Robert Cooper in 1690—the house was gone (TR.,I,610).

LOT NO. 7

This lot belonged to Mark Meggs. There is no proof in the town records that he ever built a house on it (TR.,I,16). In 1665 Meggs is styled as being “of Hog Island” (Hempstead TR., I,194) and he appears in 1667 as the Miller at Huntington (Huntington TR.,I,109).

LOT NO. 8

The only information we have about this lot is that in 1675 it is mentioned as belonging to Gideon Wright (TR.,I,113). He apparently got it from his mother Alice in 1668 (TR.,I,42).

LOT NO. 9

This lot was laid out to Peter Wright in the original distribution of 1653. Peter might be said to be the Founder of Oyster Bay as he is the only member of the original signers of the Indian deed who remained in the town more than ten years, and his descendants are to this day still active in the village.

The western part of this lot was sold by Anthony, grandson of Peter, to William, grandson of Nicholas. William built the house which stands today in 1705. This is the white house on the corner currently lived in by Mr. James Baldwin, who bought it from the Wright family only a few years ago.

It is believed that the eastern part of this lot was sold by Anthony to Henry Townsend III, from whose son Absolom it descended to his great granddaughter Mrs. Storrs. She sold it just prior to the Civil War. It was on this part of the lot that Peter's house stood.

LOT NO. 10

This lot was laid out to Nicholas Wright in the original distribution of 1653. Prior to his death he gave the eastern portion of it to his son Caleb for a homestead with the provision in his will that at his death and after his wife's decease Caleb would inherit the whole lot, plus the houses and orchards.

Nicholas at one time also owned part of Lot No. 10-A to the rear of his home lot which he subsequently sold to Benjamin Hubbard. He also owned Lot No. 20 bought from William Crocker and sold to his son John in 1675 for his home lot.

Nicholas' original lot (No. 10) remained in the Wright family until just before the Civil War. The house on it had been for many years abandoned for the one built across the street on Peter's place (Lot 9). In 1720 William, son of the first Caleb, deeded to the Baptist Society 40 foot square on which they had already built their church. This is where the present Baptist church is located.

LOT NO. 10-A

The early history of this lot is so confused that it cannot be clearly unravelled. William Wright owned it at one point and sold it to his son Caleb along with Lot No. 9 and perhaps Lot No. 10 in 1752 (TR.,VI,16). The size of the lot in this deed is given as ten acres which would indicate a double lot. Sometime before 1796 Daniel and Stephen Dodge are mentioned as the owners and in 1796 Coles Wortman is mentioned (TR.,VII,441).

LOT NO. 11

This is the lot originally granted to Samuel Mayo. Apparently he never lived or built in Oyster Bay and he lost the house on a debt to Anthony Wright, perhaps it was the original purchase money. In 1699 the deed was confirmed to Anthony Wright by the town (TR.,II,406,691).

In 1667 Anthony conveyed the lot to his nephew, Job Wright, the son of Peter (TR.,I,102). Job built a house which was only torn down sometime within the past ten years. The lot was then conveyed to Job's son Anthony—the date is unknown and the deed is lost (TM.,p.63). Anthony in turn sold it to Rose, the widow of Justice John Townsend, date and deed again are missing (TM.,p.63).

On June 6, 1712 Rose sold it to George Townsend (TR., III,471). In 1712 it was sold to Abraham Underhill (TR.,VI, 490). His son gave it to his sister Sarah, the wife of James Dickinson (TR.,VI,490). They moved to Dutchess County and in 1748 sold it to Jacob Townsend and William Butler (TR.,VI,489). These two split the land east and west and in 1750 Jacob Townsend sold his half, the north one, to Alice Weeks (TR.,VI,27).

LOT NO. 12

This was the original lot laid out in 1653 to the third Wright brother, Anthony. He never had any children and in 1680 willed it to his sister-in-law, Alice Crabbe. She in turn gave it to her son-in-law Isaac Horner in 1684. The size of this lot is given in the town records as six acres (TR.,I,57).

LOT NO. 13

This lot, another of the original grants, was laid out to the Rev. William Leverich. Leverich never lived here going on to the town of Huntington where he preached for a number of years and did missionary work among the Indians.

His son Eleazer sold it in 1658 to Nicholas Simpkins, the son-in-law of Francis Weeks (TR.,I,40). This deed is the first from a white man on the records. Simpkins sold it in turn to Alice Crabbe and removed to Mosquito Cove in 1670 (TR.,I,57). At this time the place had on it 24 apple trees in bearing, and one pear tree.

Alice Crabbe, the widow of Peter Wright, gave the lot to her son Adam Wright who, when moving to Cedar Swamp, sold it to Nathaniel Coles, Sr., and he in turn in 1691 gave it to his son Nathaniel who had just married Rose, daughter of John Wright. From him it descended to his son Wright Coles who sold it to Samuel Townsend, whose heirs sold it to Dr. Seely. It was broken up and sold in pieces by Dr. Seely just prior to the Civil War (TM.,p.63).

LOT NO. 14

This is first found in the possession of Benjamin Hubbard who presumably got it as a town grant. In 16[?] he acquired the south part of Lot No. 10-A from Nicholas Wright (TR.,I,31). In 1670 Hubbard sold both these lots to Josias Latting with the provision that they were to be occupied only after Hubbard's death. Hubbard was married to Josias Latting's sister (TR.,I,54). In 1688 both lots were sold to Edmund Wright as a trade for a lot of land at Matinecock (TR.,I,490). Latting at this time had moved to Matinecock.

Edmund conveyed the land to his son Edmund Wright, Jr., who in turn conveyed it to his son-in-law John Townsend (TM., p.64). The next owner is Absolom Townsend; however the date and deed are lost (TR.,V,390). In 1752 Absolom sold to William Butler with Lot 15 and one other (TR.,V,390).

Next it was sold to Tristram Dodge, 1754. One-half acre had already been sold to John Rutgers as a garden plot so that brings the size down to about four and a half acres (TR.,VI,34). The land was then conveyed to the Dodge daughters, Sara and Amy, in 1776 (TR.,VI,103). The size is given in this deed as three and a half acres. The land subsequently came into the possession of Henry Chadeayne who had sold it by 1860 (TM., p.64).

LOT NO. 15

This is the lot originally granted to Richard Holbrook in 1653 and according to the Townsend Memorial Holbrook built the first house in the village (TM.,p.13). The next owner sometime prior to 1661 was Jonas Holstead (TR.,I,582). In 1661 John Townsend bought the land when he moved here. (TR.,I,582). He died in 1668 and was the first to be buried in the cemetery still located on Fortified Hill.

On July 10, 1671 the lot was conveyed to John's son George Townsend (TM.,p.89). He in turn conveyed it to his son Samuel Townsend (TM.,p.66). In 1743 it was sold to John Youngs. However, the burial ground of 6 x 3 rods in the north edge was withheld (TR.,V,391). The size of the lot in this deed is given as five acres.

In 1747 the lot was sold to Absolom Townsend (TR.,V,390) —again the size is given as five acres. In 1752 it was sold to William Butler, a saddler, along with Lot No. 14 and one other. The size of this total was given as 15 acres and the burial ground was again withheld (TR.,VI,495). The next deed is lost and the date of the transfer is unknown but it is very clear that it was sold to Samuel Townsend of the Jericho family (TM.,p.67; TR., VII,441).

It was sold in 1796 by Samuel's heirs to Ephraim Townsend for 450 pounds. The burial ground again was excepted and four square rods were added to it. The lot then went through from street to street, and included nine acres (TR.,VII,441). The next two deeds are lost and the actual dates of transfer unknown. However, apparently it was next sold to Daniel Cock who in turn sold it to the Rev. Aaron Jackson. Jackson owned it up through the Civil War (TM.,p.67).

LOT NO. 16

Thomas Armitage, the first owner, presumably received it as a town grant. A will bearing no date gave it to his prospective bride Ann Lyllestane just before they were married (TR.,I,7). This was probably early in 1659. In 1664 they sold it jointly to John Townsend (TM.,p.90; TR.,I,591).

In 1671 it was conveyed to John's son, Daniel, by his mother Elizabeth Townsend (TM.,p.90). In turn it was conveyed to his son, Robert. There is no date and Lot No. 17 was included in this conveyance (TM.,p.67). In 1720 it was exchanged with Caleb Coles for land at Mosquito Cove (TM.,p.67; TR.,III,443; TR.,IV,481).

There are no further actual deeds to be found. However, it is mentioned as having been sold to Phil Fiat who in turn sold it to Cornelius Van Horn in 1746 (TR.,V,390). Again in 1751 Samuel Shaw is mentioned as the owner (TR.,VI,495). Samuel Shaw was constable and tax collector of the town in 1751 and a court action indicates that he absconded with the town's funds.

LOT NO. 17

The first owner of this lot of which we have any record was John Townsend (TM.,p.87). This gave him Lots 15, 16, and 17. It was conveyed to his son James by his mother and called three and three quarters acres in size in 1671 (TM.,p.88).

The next owner was David Underhill who sold the north half adjacent to Daniel Townsend's land to Daniel in 1698—the size is given as two acres (TR.,I,534).

From here there are no further deeds to be found. However, in checking with Dr. Wicker Jackson we find that in the following order the lot belonged successively to the Burtis family around 1800, then to Mr. S. H. DeBeVoise, then to the Adams family, then to the Work family who sold it to Dr. Myron Jackson in 1924.

LOT NO. 18

This five acre lot was granted by the Town to John Thompson December 1, 1668 (TR.,I,205). Thompson was the first blacksmith in Oyster Bay. He lived in Stamford, Connecticut, before arriving sometime in the fall of 1668. On December 17 of the same year a contract was drawn up between Thompson and the Town of Oyster Bay giving him a lot and commons privilege which was to be his during the time that he lived in the village. If he moved from the village the lot and privilege was to return again to the town, the town paying Thompson for whatever improvements he put on the lot. However, if he died in the town before leaving, the lot and privilege were to go to his heirs. On Thompson's part he engaged to supply the town with all the tools and such necessaries as they might need and to do the work as reasonably and as well as the town could have had it done by any other smith (TR.,I,43).

Thompson soon, for a breach of this contract, got into trouble and on the 13th of November 1673 we find that he had moved to Brookhaven or Setauket and was there carrying on his trade. He was given permission to sell his land but could not come and live on it himself; nor was he to sell the land to anybody of whom the town disapproved. What the specific trouble was between Thompson and the village is not made clear. In 1673 the attorneys of Thompson sold his lot to Joseph Ludlam and William Butler (TR.,I,84). On December 2, of the same year Butler made over his share to Ludlam (TR.,I,85).

In 1685 Ludlam sold the lot to Edward White who already owned Lot No. 19. In this last deed the lot is called John "Townsend's" but the description could only be that of the one owned by "Thompson" and it must be assumed that this is a clerical error.

LOT NO. 19

It is interesting to note that this lot is styled as the lot that is "left for a tradesman" in the deed of December 1668 for Lot No. 18. In 1669 it was granted to George Dennis, the size being three acres (TR.,I,211).

In 1681 Dennis mortgaged his place to Edward Griffith, a merchant of London, for 134 pounds. The mortgage was to be cleared if he paid 68 pounds in "traine oyle" delivered in New York for 30 shillings per pound by April 1st. Dennis forfeited the mortgage which was paid by Edward White of Southampton, thus White took title of the house and lot on November 18, 1682 (TR.,I,159,163-165).

Both Lots 18 and 19 stayed in the White family at least until the Civil War and there are still heirs living on a portion of that lot at the corner of what is now Railroad Avenue and South Street.

LOT NO. 20

This lot was first granted to William Crocker by the Town of Oyster Bay—date unknown (TR.,I,37). Some time later he sold it to Nicholas Wright but apparently died before it could be made of record, and in 1668 his widow, Ann Crocker, confirmed the sale (TR.,I,37).

Nicholas in turn sold the lot to his son John in 1675 who built a house on it and used it for his homestead (TR.,I,113). John married Mary, the daughter of Henry Townsend, and from him the house descended to his daughter Rose who left it to her son Wright Coles.

After this the deeds are lost. However, there is every reason to believe that part of the house on the corner of Lexington Avenue and Mill River Road in which Mrs. John Slade now lives was built by John Wright.

LOT NO. 21

According to the Townsend Memorial this lot was originally laid out to Josias Latting who married Sarah, the daughter of Nicholas Wright, either late in 1667 or early in 1668 (TR.,I,76). The earliest town grant to Josias is dated 1667 in which it was ordered that he should have two acres of land adjoining Caleb Wright's land. On May 17th in the year 1675 Josias Latting sold "My house and plot of land" amounting to something like half acre to William Buckler of Oyster Bay and moved to Matinecock.²

LOT NO. 22

First granted to Caleb Wright who exchanged it with his brother, Edmund, before 1686 (TR.,I,365). His heirs bought Lot No. 21 from William Buckler and then Edmund Wright 2nd sold both lots to his son-in-law, John Townsend.

They descended to John's son, Ephraim, whose heirs sold to James Prior, who sold to Jacob Colwell, from whose heirs they were bought by J. C. Townsend between 1833 and 1859 (TM., p.59).

LOT NO. 23

This lot was first granted by the town to Isaac Doughty January 6, 1673 (TR.,I,221). It was laid out 30 x 20 poles on the condition that he build on it within a year (TR.,I,222). This makes the lot approximately three and three quarter acres. It was sold to John Weeks, Jr. in 1695 for seven pounds. There is no mention of a house (TR.,II,211).

²He also sold two acres more of land which was granted to him by the Town of Oyster Bay to build a home lot on. This land is at the south end of Edmund Wright's home lot and bounded on the east by the back road to Pine Hollow (Lexington Avenue). There is some question as to whether either of these lots fit the description as given in the Townsend Memorial for Lot No. 21.

LOT NO. 24

This lot was originally granted, but never laid out, to Nicholas Wright in payment for work on the mill—six acres in size—no date (TR.,I,365). He in turn conveyed it to his sons, Edmund and John, in 1674 (TR.,I,327). They exchanged it with David Underhill for some land on Hog Island (TR.,I,311). In 1694 the land was actually surveyed by the town for David Underhill. The description is given as twelve acres on the townsman's rights of Edmund and John Wright (TR.,II,363).

LOT NO. 25

There is no record of the acquisition of this lot but apparently it first belonged to Joseph Weeks, the son of Francis Weeks (TM., p.67). We find he is mentioned as the owner in 1673 (TR.,I, 222). When Joseph's father-in-law died he moved to the latter's place in Matinecock and gave the land to his son, Henry Weeks (TM.,p.67). Henry sold it to his brother John, and we find it mentioned for the last time as probably being only a part of a lot in 1695 (TR.,II,211). John soon also bought Lot No. 23.

LOT NO. 26

Again the acquisition of this lot is unknown. However, apparently it first belonged to John Weeks, the brother of Joseph and also the son of Francis (TM.,p.67). He conveyed it with a house to Nathaniel Weeks (TM.,p.67).

Nathaniel died without any children and conveyed it to his sisters, Phoebe Young, who was married to Richard Young, and Susanna, who was married to Richard Townsend (TR.,V,362). Susanna and Richard sold their half to Phoebe in 1723 (TR.,IV, 176); and Phoebe in turn sold the whole, since she was living in Stamford, Connecticut, to her nephew John Townsend—a house carpenter, in 1746 (TR.,V,361). He in turn sold it to George Weeks in 1747 (TR.,VI,152).

LOT NO. 27

The first two owners of this lot are not too clear; however, there is every reason to believe that the first was Joseph Sutten who received the land as a town grant for work on the mill in 1663 (TR.,I,11). In 1665 he sold it to Robert Coles (TR.,I,109) and in 1678 it was sold to John Townsend (TR.,I,110). In 1687 Townsend sold it to John Rogers for nine pounds silver—the size is given as six acres (TR.,I,379). On March 17, 1687 it was conveyed to his son-in-law, William Crocker (TR.,I,486). However, on July 31, 1688 this deed was voided (TR.,I,486).

Apparently Crocker and his father-in-law didn't get along for another deed written for land on Beaver Creek in 1688 was annulled with the reason that "there hath differences arisen of late between John Rogers . . . and William Crocker . . ." etc. Since the above deed had been voided, in 1696 the lot was sold to Ephraim Carpenter along with the south half of Lot 29 (TR.,II,192).

In 1696 both of these were sold to Captain Thomas Townsend—the size of Lot No. 27 is given as six acres (TR.,II,279). This lot and a half were signed over the same day to Townsend's daughter, Freelove, the wife of Thomas Jones, then of Rhode Island (TR.,II,280).

Thomas and Freelove Jones moved to South Oyster Bay and in 1712 sold the lot and a half to George Townsend (TR.,III, 469). The deed for the next conveyance is missing, however, around 1746 John Weeks is mentioned as the owner (TR.,VI, 152).

LOT NO. 28

The only owner of this lot that we can find was Samuel Weeks the son of Frances who owned it, or at least it was still called Samuel Weeks' lot, as late as 1712 (TM.,p.68; TR.,I,94).

LOT NO. 29

This lot was originally granted to Capt. John Underhill sometime prior to 1664 and we find it again confirmed by the town to his son John, Jr., March 25th of that year (TR.,I,11). On December 24, 1667 it was sold to Thomas Townsend with a house, since John Underhill, Jr., had moved to Matinecock (TR.,I,53).

Thomas Townsend moved to Portsmouth, Rhode Island and in 1674 he sold the south half of the lot, including his house, to John and Ann Rogers (TR.,I,94). This south half was sold with Lot 27 to Ephraim Carpenter in 1696 (TR.,II,192). The size of this half is given as three acres which would indicate that the whole lot originally had been six acres. In 1696 the south half was sold to Captain Thomas Townsend with Lot 27 (TR.,II,279). Thomas in turn conveyed it to his daughter, Freelo, wife of Thomas Jones, the same year (TR.,II,280). Apparently Freelo had met and married Jones in Portsmouth sometime after her father had moved there. They moved to Oyster Bay South and in 1712 sold the south half, again with Lot 27, to George Townsend (TR.,III,469).

The north half of this lot was conveyed with Lots 30 (a "half lot") and 31 (a total of two whole lots) by Thomas Townsend to his son Justice John Townsend in 1696 (TM.,p.68; TR.,II,288).

LOT NO. 30

This is called a "half lot." Only three acres, it was granted originally by the Town to Ann Crocker, the widow of William Crocker, in 1668 (TR.,I,205). She later married John Rogers and they lived there until 1673 when they exchanged with Thomas Townsend for the south half of Lot No. 29 (TR.,I,94). In 1696 this half lot was conveyed with the north portion of Lot No. 29 and all of 31 (a total of two whole lots) to their son, Justice John Townsend (TM.,p.68; TR.,II,288).

LOT NO. 31

This lot apparently first belonged to John Townsend II, although there is no record of its acquisition. He sold it to his brother Thomas Townsend in 1668 who in turn conveyed it to his son, Justice John Townsend, in 1696 along with the north half of No. 29 and the half-lot No. 30 making the total of two whole lots (TR.,II,288; TM.,p.68).

LOT NO. 32

This was a one and one half acre piece of swamp land originally granted by the town to Nicholas Simpkins in 1668 (TR.,I,208). He sold it along with Lot No. 13 to Alice Crabbe in 1670 (TR.,I, 57). In 1682 she conveyed it to her son, Adam Wright (TR.,I, 149). In 1687 he sold it to John Doles (TR.,I,457). It was next sold to John Dewsbury, but the deed is missing (TR.,I,572). From Dewsbury it passed in 1691 to John Newman along with Lot No. 33 (TR.,I,572).

LOT NO. 33

This was another one and one half acre piece of swamp land originally granted to Samuel Andrews in 1668 (TR.,I,208). He sold it to Joseph Ludlum in 1679 (TR.,I,585). Next it went to Isaac Horner in 1685 (TR.,I,585). Job Wright acquired it the following year (TR.,I,586) and four years later John Dewsbury paid six pounds for it (TR.,I,586). In 1691 Dewsbury sold it to John Newman along with Lot No. 32 (TR.,I,572). The size of these two lots (Nos. 32 and 33) is given in this deed as three acres. Newman already owned the home lot immediately east of it (No. 34).

LOT NO. 34

This lot was granted by the town to John Robinson in 1681. The grant provided that all previous grants to him be made void.

He was a joiner and seems to have been in the town for at least five years (TR.,I,247,228). In 1690 he sold the lot with a house on it, which he must have built, to John Newman (TR.,I,571). About the same time Newman bought the swamp land in Lots 32 and 33 and four years later bought No. 35 to make a total of some 16 acres.

He died intestate without heirs in 1697 (TM.,p.69). The land was unclaimed until 1731 when Charles Boyle, an Englishman, petitioned the Crown for a patent to it (TR.,IV,661). The patent was granted the same year (TR.,IV,423). This is an interesting example of the process by which one, not a citizen of the town, obtained at small cost valuable property which might well have been secured to the citizens of the village. A William Moyles, acting as attorney for Boyle (who was still in England and never did see the land) sold part of it to Samuel Shaw and retained part of it himself (TM.,p.69).

LOT NO. 35

The deeds for the first three conveyances of this land are lost. However, we do know that it belonged to Joseph and Benjamin Smith, perhaps given to them as a grant by the town. The next owner was Daniel Whitehead who in turn sold it to Thomas Matthews. In 1670 Thomas Powell as attorney for Thomas Matthews sold the lot to Joseph Ludlam (TR.,I,56). On April 28, there is evidence that one acre was added to this lot by purchase from Thomas Townsend (TR.,I,57).

In 1684 the lot plus the one acre addition was sold to Edward White. In this deed the size of the lot itself is given as five acres (TR.,II,163). The land was made over then to John Newman for four cows and six shillings in 1694 (TR.,II,164). This gave Newman a total of Lots 32, 33, 34 and 35. For the rest of the history of this lot see that of Lot No. 34.

LOTS NO. 36, 37, 38

In the Townsend Memorial this acreage is considered as one lot. However, in 1687 a deed mentions specifically three home lots for a total of seventeen acres. In an effort to determine how this three lot section was built up, we can account for only two.

One of them was granted to William Crocker sometime prior to 1660. His widow, Ann, sold it to Richard Latting in 1660 (TR.,I,5). In 1662 Latting sold to Samuel Andrews (TR., I,166)—this deed was confirmed later by Joseph and William Crocker, Ann's sons, in 1683 (TR.,I,168).

Another one of the original lots belonged to Anthony Wright and was confirmed to Samuel Andrews in 1668 (TR.,I, 42). This makes two of the three home lots accounted for. There is no record of the third one.

The three together were sold in 1687 by Samuel Andrews to Joseph Ludlam for 100 pounds silver and in this deed they are specifically called "three home lots," a total of seventeen acres (TR.,I,448). In 1695 the three lots together were sold to Mill John Townsend (TR.,II,180). On May 4, 1736 the land was conveyed to Matthew and Zeruiah Townsend Parrish by Esther, the widow of Mill John and mother of Zeruiah (TR.,VI,595).

The story of the courtship of Zeruiah Townsend and Matthew Parrish is an amusing one. According to the traditions preserved by Dr. P. Townsend and corroborated by the town records, John Townsend's widow Esther was a woman of remarkable talents and ambition. Dr. Townsend said she fitted out a sloop for a trading voyage to Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, and started off with her son Micajah and her daughter Zeruiah. The cargo being principally cider the sloop was nicknamed "The Cider Tub" by the people of the village. Dr. Parrish who was, or who had been, a surgeon in the Royal Navy was a member of the party and made himself so agreeable and useful that he captivated Zeruiah who married him (TM.,p.193).

Matthew Parrish conveyed the land to his son John. The date is unknown (TM.,p.70). John lived on it to a very advanced age and after his death the house fell down and his heirs sold the land to Thomas Kilner, who in turn sold it to Ezra Minor. The Minor heirs owned it as late as the Civil War (TM.,p.70).

LOT NO. 39

This lot apparently first belonged to Richard Crabbe, although there is no accurate record of its acquisition (TM.,p.72; TR.,I, 318). It was conveyed to Isaac Horner and Lydia Wright Horner —there is no record of the date of this deed (TM.,p.72; TR.,I, 318). In 1685 it was sold by Isaac and Lydia Horner to Eliazer Derby then of Boston (TR.,I,318). In 1688 Derby sold it to John Rogers (TR.,I,381,447) who sold it the same year to Thomas Weeks, already the owner of Lot No. 40. The size is given in this deed as five acres (TR.,I,471). Lots 39 and 40 together disappear from the records until 1700 when Edward White sold both of them (ten acres) to Samuel McCoun (TR.,II,498). After this no more deeds are found.

However, from the Townsend Memorial we learn that later on it became the homestead of Augustine Weeks who conveyed it to his son Refine Weeks—he in turn sold it to Walter Franklin, and Franklin sold it to Albert Albertson. Albertson's great-granddaughter sold the land to John and Joseph Wright. W. H. Bridgen owned it in 1859 and in turn sold Lot No. 39 to D. T. Young and Lot No. 40 to Richard Irving sometime in the next fifteen years. The Irvings still own a part of Lot No. 40 (TM., p.72).³

LOT NO. 40

This lot was first given as a town grant to John Roebings (Robinson) in 1667. He was a cordwainer and lived in Matinecock.

³Also Beers *Atlas of Queens County*, 1873, page 126 and map drawn by William J. Youngs in 1833, the original of which is in the possession of Mrs. Sara Hoppin of Oyster Bay.



Figure 6

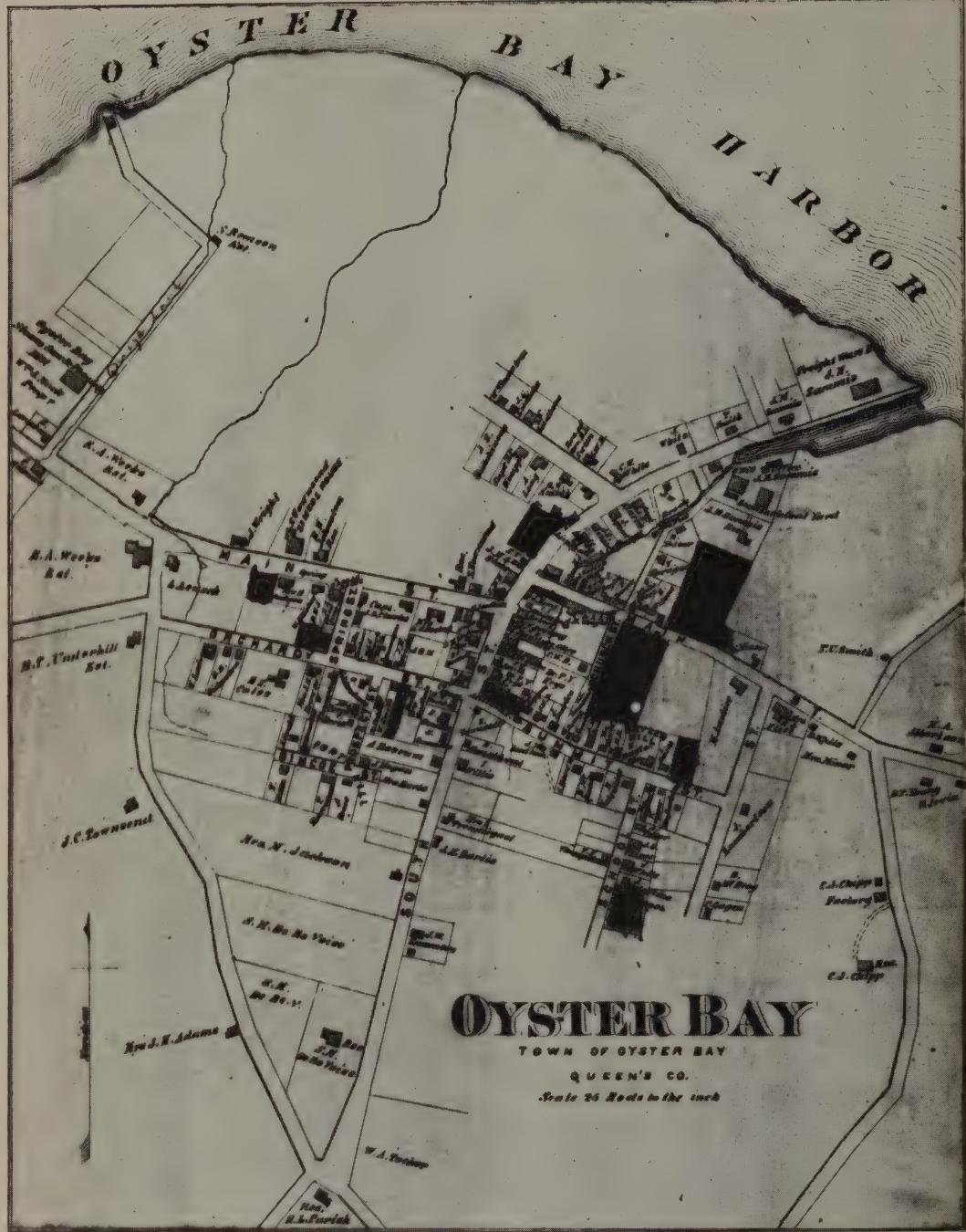
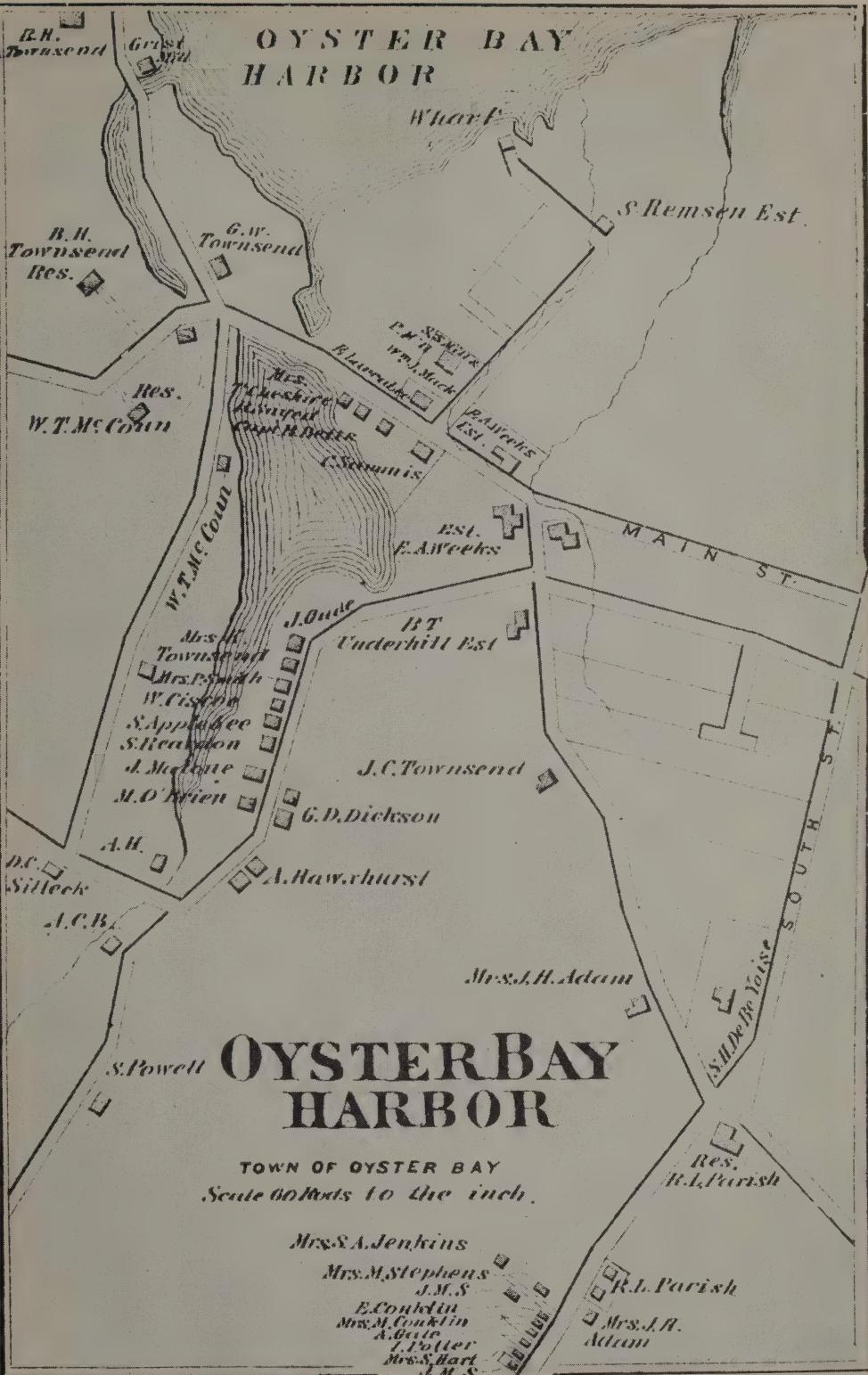


Figure 7

OYSTER BAY HARBOR



OYSTER BAY HARBOR

TOWN OF OYSTER BAY
Scale 60 rods to the inch.

Mrs. S.A. Jenkins

Mrs. M. Stephens J.M.S.

E. Coulton

Mrs. M. Coulton

A. Galt

J. Potter

Mrs. S. Hart

I. M. S.

Res.
R.L. Parish

R.L. Parish

Mrs. J.H.

Adam

Figure 8

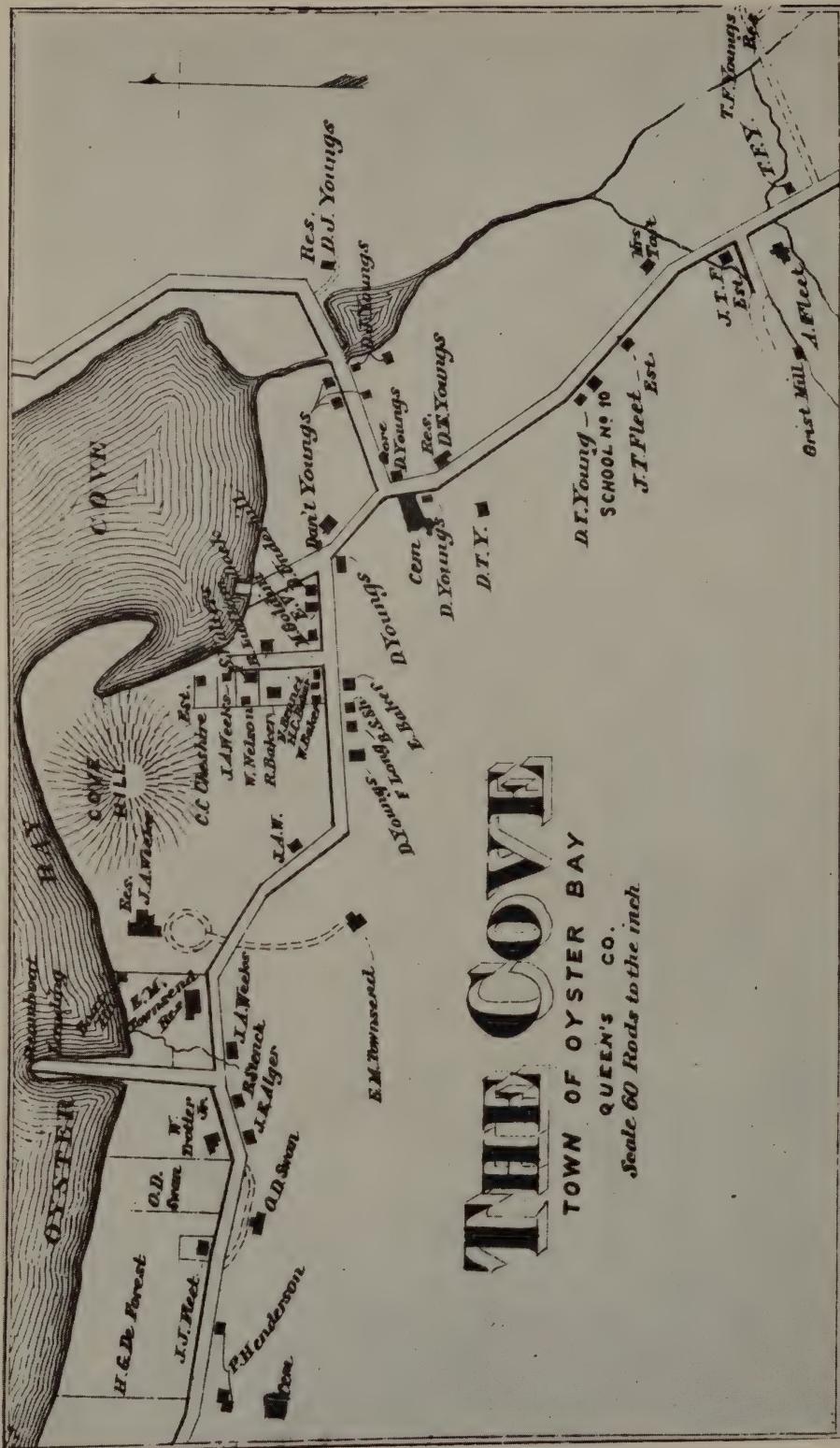


Figure 9

Apparently he never built a house and the lot reverted to the town (TR.,I,204,215). In 1673 the lot was again granted, this time to Thomas Weeks, son of Francis (TR.,I,p.221). Weeks already owned Lot No. 39 and for the rest of this history see that lot number.

LOT NO. 41

Francis Weeks moved here from Hempstead in 1661 and was granted this six acres for his house lot (TR.,I,5). In 1673 he gave two acres on the east edge to his son James (TR.,I,88) and on the same date he conveyed the rest of the lot to another son, Daniel (TR.,I,99).

In 1717 Daniel gave to his sons, Solomon and Abraham, the four acres which he had gotten from his father. Solomon had the west half with an eight rod frontage on the road, and Abraham had the east half with a nine rod frontage on the road. For later deeds on this property see the reference to papers in possession of Mrs. Susan W. Albertson mentioned in the Oyster Bay town records Vol. VI, p. 503.

LOT NO. 42

This lot originally belonged to James Weeks and it was built up by the two acres given to him by his father Francis in 1673 (TR.,I,88) and one acre on the east edge of this granted him by the town in 1677 (TR.,I,233). This was conveyed to his son Edmund in 1705 (TR.,II,657). There are no further conveyances for this property found in the records.

LOT NO. 43

This was first granted by the town to Ephram Pallmore in 1677. However he failed to build on it and it was forfeited to the town (TR.,I,233). It was next granted to Samuel Forman, Jr., in 1681 (TR.,I,247). Samuel died and his brother Alexander sold it to

John Rogers in 1695 with the dwelling house that was on it—the size is mentioned as three acres (TR.,I,382). John Rogers died and his widow married George Baldwin. They sold the lot to Frances Gotter in 1710 (TR.,III,442).

Gotter in turn sold it to George Webb, a mariner of New York City, for 130 pounds in 1720 (TR.,IV,79). George Webb, apparently successful for he is now styled as a “gentleman” of Middlesex, New Jersey, conveyed the land in 1774 to his son John, a mariner of Yarmouth, Massachusetts. The size in some inexplicable fashion has grown to six acres (TR.,V,247). John in turn sold it to Thomas Brewer of Newport, a mariner also, later in the same year (TR.,V,337).

LOT NO. 44

According to the Townsend Memorial this was one of the first lots built upon by a man named Walter Salter. He apparently sold it to Matthew Pryor for we find Pryor selling it in turn to Henry Townsend, Sr., in 1672 (TM.,p.73; TR.,I,103). Henry Townsend conveyed it around 1687 to his daughter Susanna, the wife of Aaron Forman. The size is given in this deed as five acres (TR.,I,408). Susanna and her son Jacob sold it to James Tillot for twelve pounds in 1725 (TR.,I,409).

LOT NO. 45

Richard Harcutt owned several homesteads in the town spot. However, he finally settled on this lot sometime prior to 1685. In 1696 he conveyed the land to his son Benjamin (TR.,II,285). In 1723 Benjamin and his son Nathaniel sold to Micajah Townsend the lot with everything “within doors and without” for 300 pounds (TR.,V,43). It was in turn sold to Joseph Simson a merchant in 1726 and the size is given in this deed as ten acres (TR.,IV,260).

LOT NO. 46

Mathias Harvey is the first owner to appear on the records although how he acquired the lot is uncertain. In 1671 he sold it to William Frost (TR.,I,71). In 1692 Frost sold to Robert Cooper, the size being six acres (TR.,I,611).

Robert Cooper died and his widow, Marcy, gave the lot to her grandsons, Samuel and Daniel, the sons of Samuel Townsend. Daniel died young and Samuel in the latter part of his life exchanged it with his nephew Joseph for a place at Yellowcotes. Joseph's descendants still occupied the homestead as late as the Civil War (TM.,p.77).

LOT NO. 47

This land comprising some 31 acres was part of the holdings of Dr. Robert Cooper, the son of Dr. Simon Cooper. After his death his widow Marcy sold it in 1729 to Jonas Green for 95 pounds (TR.,IV,381). Jonas in turn sold it to Jacob Weeks in 1745 for 180 pounds (TR.,V,423). Jacob's great-grandchildren sold it to Dr. Dekay (TM.,p.77; Young's Map of 1833).

LOT NO. 48

All we know of this place is that it was part of Robert Cooper's property and around 1726 it went by the name of Marcy Cooper's Garden—it being directly across the road from her house (TR.,IV,260).

LOT NO. 49

This lot was pasture land which went with Lot No. 43.

LOT NO. 50

This lot belonged originally to Richard Harcutt. Thomas Youngs married his daughter Elizabeth sometime prior to 1679 and in

1685 Richard gave to his son-in-law the south half of this lot amounting to a half acre (TR.,I,279). In 1688 Thomas sold it to Thomas Cheshire with houses, barns, orchard, gardens, etc. The size was still a half acre (TR.,I,505).

In 1698 we find Thomas Youngs sold what is certainly the same piece of land to Thomas Wood, a house carpenter, in payment for building Youngs' new house (TR.,II,218). How the land came back into possession of Youngs after being sold to Thomas Cheshire is not clear.

In 1700 Thomas Wood sold the lot to William Bradford who at that time was styled as a "merchant of Oyster Bay" (TR., II,491). This is the same William Bradford who was a printer in New York City and in 1725 published the first newspaper in New York colony. Bradford sold to Samuel McCoun early in 1707 for 15 pounds the lot which had now grown to one acre and extended from the road north to the Bay (TR.,III,250).

Again we find the same lot being sold twice to two different people. In 1714 McCoun sold it to Jonas Green, a shoemaker, for 15 pounds (TR.,III,320). Later, in 1716, he sold it to James Rossell (TR.,IV,222). James Burr, a tanner from Huntington, was the next owner acquiring it in 1719 (TR.,IV,4). Next in a deed of 1726 Samuel Burshered and then Esther Townsend are mentioned as the owners (TR.,IV,260). Esther sold to Richard Harcutt in 1750 (TR.,VI,38).

LOT NO. 51

John Richbell, the first large land owner in Oyster Bay, originally owned what is noted here as Lots No. 51, 52, and probably even some of the land west of Lot No. 52. On November 17, 1666 he sold Lot No. 51 to Thomas Hart, a merchant of London, Nathaniel Sylvester, and Latimore Samson (TR.,I,143). These three in 1681 sold the land to Simon Cooper, a doctor who moved here from Shrewsbury, New Jersey (TR.,I,143). No further deeds for the property may be found, however, we do know

that Daniel Parrish owned the land in 1805 as there is a survey among the Youngs' papers showing this lot.

LOT NO. 52

This lot also was part of John Richbell's holdings and was bought along with 51 by Simon Cooper. He sold it to Edward White and from Edward it fell to his son Robert. It next appears in the possession of his sister Mary White who gave it to Robert, Edward and Harvey the sons of her sister, Abigail Colwell. In this deed it is interesting to note that Mary withheld a quarter acre on the southeast corner where her father Edward was buried. This is the location of the graveyard located there today and Edward White's grave is still visible. The size is given as two lots—total of ten acres (TR.,VI,73).

Edward Colwell lived there and after his death Augustine Weeks gave the southwest corner (ten rods from east to west and eight from north to south) to his son, Refine. He in turn sold it with the property on the south side of the road to Walter Franklin and he to Albert Albertson whose family still owned it the latter part of the last century (TM.,p.78).

The land lying on the north side of East Main Street between Lot No. 52 and South Street was so cut up in small parcels that it is almost impossible to trace its history with accuracy. It is known that the section between the Episcopal Church and South Street was not built upon for many years except for the Town House erected in 1675 (TR.,I,226). Prior to that there had been a clay pit and brick yard near Anthony's Bridge.

While there remain in the village several houses which antedate the Revolution, there is only one which contains work done before 1700. That is the house in Lot 20 on the corner where Mrs. John Slade now lives, a part of which was built by John Wright. It seems a pity that the ravages of time and progress have combined to wipe out all but the merest traces of a heritage of which Oyster Bay may well be proud.

Appendix II

LOCATION OF PLACES WITH OBSOLETE NAMES

Anthony's Brook	flows north just east of South Street in Oyster Bay Village.
Ash Swamp	vicinity of Anthony's Brook north of East Main Street.
Beaver Brook	rises in Brookville and flows into Mill Neck Bay.
Beaver Swamp	on Beaver Brook below the Shu.
Cantiague	at the angle in the township boundary west of Hicksville.
Cedar Point	northeast corner of Mill Neck.
Chagechagon Swamp	at Locust Valley.
Cleft, The	where Cleft Road cuts across Mill Neck.
Cold Spring	the head of Cold Spring River.
Dayton Swamp	vicinity of Fox Point beach.
Dumby Swamp	southeast of Oyster Bay Village.
Grape Vine Swamp	at Oyster Bay Cove.
Fleet's Woods	on East Main Street between the village and Cove Hill.
Fresh Pond	one of two is in Oyster Bay Cove.
Gut, The	the channel under Bayville Bridge.
Hog Island	Center Island.
Horse Neck	Lloyd's Neck.
Huckleberry Point	on east side of Mill Neck.
Killingworth	just north of Locust Valley.
Littleworth	the southern part of Sea Cliff.
Lusum	Jericho.

Nan's Hollow	Up Berry Hill Road, Oyster Bay Village.
Nobs Hill	on Center Island.
Norwich	East Norwich.
Papaquatunk River	Beaver Brook.
Planting Fields	vicinity of W. R. Coe estate west of Mill Hill.
Quogue Lane	Larrabee Ave., Oyster Bay Village.
Pine Hollow	vicinity of Gravel pits on South Street.
Pine Island	the section of Bayville at the north end of Bayville Bridge.
Queens Village	Lloyd's Neck.
Racoon Swamp	vicinity of Fox Point beach.
Rattle Snake Hollow	in Glen Cove.
Rogers Canoe Hollow	on north end of Mill Neck.
Round Swamp	on south boundary of the Old Purchase near Cold Spring.
Sagamore Hill	east of Mill Neck R.R. Station.
Shu, The	vicinity of Brokaw Ponds on Chicken Valley Road.
Seaman's Neck	on south edge of Township.
Ship Point Lane	Florence Avenue, Oyster Bay Village.
Snapsack Hollow	south of Glen Cove and west of Cedar Swamp Road.
Susco's Wigwam	Brookville.
Three Run Swamp	between Larrabee Avenue and the Mill Stream, north of West Main Street, Oyster Bay Village.
Unkaway Neck	on south edge of Township.
Washway, The	ford over Mill River near head of Lake Avenue.

Appendix III

THE FOLLOWING TABLE GIVES THE NAME OF EVERY FREEHOLDER who appears in the town records from 1653 to 1702. There are 146 in all.

In evaluating the information to glean some idea of the population at any period it must be realized that in the earliest years nearly all the inhabitants were freeholders. As the town grew more townsmen were admitted who had only "particular" rights in common lands.

Furthermore, in the lists for 1679, 1683, and 1685 are included not only the freeholders of the "Old Purchase" (the village proper) but also those of the other communities within the Oyster Bay patent. This accounts for the disproportionately high totals for those years. That of 1683 is a tax roll and names all males over sixteen years old. It must be treated with some caution, however, as the inhabitants were "sikly" at the time and the list was prepared under difficulties.

The sources for each column in the table are as follows:

- 1653—Various records giving clues as to who *actually lived* in the town spot.
- 1661—Signers of the Townsend mill grant (TR.,I,40) and those who gave aid to the Widow Crocker (TR.,I,4).
- 1671—Shares of Fort Neck Meadows (TR.,I,218).
- 1674—Shares of Oak Neck Meadows (TR.,I,35).

- 1677—List of all those possessing freeholder's rights (TR.,I,231).
 1679—Shares of Unkaway Neck Meadows (TR.,I,130).
 1683—Tax Roll. The figures are in pounds sterling. (O'Callaghan,
 E. B., Documentary History of the State of New York, 4 Vols.,
 Albany, 1849-51, II, 306).
 1685—List of participants in Matinecock "clean-up" deed (TR.,I,333).
 1687—List of a "full" freeholder's meeting (TR.,II,337).
 1690—List of freeholders participating in second division of the Old
 Purchase (TR.,II,355).
 1702—Shareholders in the "New Purchase" (TR.,III,152-7).

NAME	OCCUPATION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		'53	'61	'71	'74	'77	'79	'83	'85	'87	'90	'02
Alling, Abraham	<i>blacksmith</i>						x	032				
Andrews, Samuel	<i>shipwright</i>			x	x	x	x	x	100			
Applegate, John										x		
Armitage, Thomas	<i>planter</i>		x	x							x	
Bates, John				x								
Bell, Henry								x				
Birdsall, Benj.								050	x			
Nathan			x		x		x	x		x		
Samuel	<i>sawmill</i>						x			x		
Stephen							x			x		
William										x		
Bleving, James	<i>seaman</i>							020				
Bridgeman, Mathew	<i>clerk</i>		x									
Brokins, Jacob							x					
Buckler, William			x	x	x	030	x		x	x		
Carpenter, Eph.						x	050	x	x		x	
Joseph	<i>miller</i>				x	100	x				x	
William							x					
Chain, Robert									x			
Cheshire, Thomas									x			
Cock, James	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x		x	100	x	x		x		
Thomas						040	x	x		x		
Coles, Daniel			x	x	100	x				x		
John					x	020						
Nathaniel	<i>yeoman</i>	x	x	070	x			x	x			
Robert	<i>mil. Capt.</i>	x	080	x	x							
Cooper, Simon	<i>surgeon</i>	x	x	100		x	x					
Robert	<i>surgeon</i>								x			
Crabb, Alice	<i>housewife</i>	x	x	100								
Richard		x	x	x								

NAME	OCCUPATION	1 '53	2 '61	3 '71	4 '74	5 '77	6 '79	7 '83	8 '85	9 '87	10 '90	11 '02
Craft (see Thornycraft)									x		x	
Crocker, William												
Davis, John	<i>yeoman</i>						x	040				
Dennis, George	<i>merchant</i>					x	x					
Dewsbury, John	<i>clothworker</i>							x			x	
Dickinson, John				x	x		x	x			x	
Joseph	<i>mil. Capt.</i>										x	
Joseph	<i>yeoman</i>					x	x	038	x	x	x	x
Samuel	<i>yeoman</i>							078	x			x
Disbrow, Henry		x										
Doughty, Isaac						x	x	066	x	x	x	x
Downing, George						x		080	x			x
Eastland, Joseph	<i>shoemaker</i>								040			
Feke, John	<i>sawmill</i>					x		130	x	x		
Finch, John			x									
Forman, Aaron				x			x	060		x	x	
Aaron, Jr.						x		080				x
Moses	<i>husbandman</i>	x				x	x		x			
Robert	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x									
Samuel	<i>husbandman</i>				x	x	050					
Thomas								039				
Frost, John						x		030				
William	<i>clothworker</i>			x	x	x	100	x		x	x	x
Fry, John	<i>shoemaker</i>							040	x	x		x
William												
Godfrey, Robert						x		x	x		x	
Guest, John											x	
Halstead, Jonas	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x									x
Harcutt, Daniel						x	x	079				
Miriam	<i>housewife</i>											x
Richard	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x			x	x	080	x	x		x
Harrison, Isaiah	<i>blacksmith</i>											x
Harvey, Mathias	<i>town clerk</i>			x	x		x					
Hawxhurst, Chris						x						
Samson												x
William								030	x		x	
Holbrooke, Rich.		x										
Horner, Isaac	<i>clothworker</i>								040			
Hubbard, Benjamin			x	x	x							
Hudson, William							x	077				

Jones, John		x					
Kirby, Richard			x	090	x		x
Latting, Josias			x	x	080	x	x
Richard	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x				
Ludlum, Joseph	<i>cooper</i>			x	x	070	x
Macoune, William							x
Meggs, Mark		x					
Miller, Thomas							x
Mott, John							x
Lawrence				018	x	x	
Mudge, Moses			x	030	x		
Newman, John	<i>shipwright</i>			020	x	x	x
Pell, Samuel	<i>shipwright</i>			040			
Pratt, John	<i>carpenter</i>				x		x
Pryor, John	<i>husbandman</i>			040	x		
Mathew		x		x	100	x	x
Richbell, John	<i>merchant</i>	x	x				
Robins, Jeremih							x
John	<i>shoemaker</i>			x	040	x	x
Rogers, John	<i>husbandman</i>			x	x	058	x
Salters, Walter		x					
Samson, Latemore			x	x			
Simkins, Nich.	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x	x	x	060	x
William							x
Smith, Will		x					
Sutton, Joseph						x	
Thornycraft, Wm.	<i>yeoman</i>			x	090	x	x
Tillier, Samuel				030	x		x
Titus, John		x					
Townsend, Daniel					x		x
Eliz.		x	x				
George				x	050	x	x
Henry	<i>miller</i>	x	x	x	x	050	
Hy., Jr.	<i>yeoman</i>			x	x	040	x
James	<i>yeoman</i>		x	x	x	090	x
Jno., Sr.	<i>carpenter</i>	x	x	x	x	082	x
Jno., Jr.	<i>shoemaker</i>	x			x	050	x
John (of N.J.)							x
John	<i>miller</i>			x	x	090	x
Robert					x	x	x
Sol.							x
Thomas	<i>planter</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x

NAME	OCCUPATION	1 '53	2 '61	3 '71	4 '74	5 '77	6 '79	7 '83	8 '85	9 '87	10 '90	11 '02
Underhill, Abr'm											x	
Dan'l											x	
John	<i>planter</i>					x	x	159	x	x		x
Nat'l								040				
Washbourne, John		x										
Weeks, Daniel									x	x	x	x
Frances	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x	x	x	x	040					
James						x	x	050	x	x	x	x
John	<i>blacksmith</i>	x	x				040	x		x	x	
John (Warwick)		x	x	x								
Joseph		x	x	x	040	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Samuel		x	x	x	040	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Thomas	<i>yeoman</i>	x	x	050	x					x		
White, Edward	<i>carpenter</i>								x	x		
Whitehead, Dan'l								x				x
Williams, Hope	<i>housewife</i>						160	x				
John	<i>shoemaker</i>	x	050	x							x	
Robt.	<i>husbandman</i>	x										
Willets, Daniel	<i>housewife</i>	x	220									x
Mary							x				x	
Richard		x	090	x	x	x						
Thomas												
Wilson, William							020					
Wood, John							039	x			x	
Wright, Adam						x	x	040	x		x	
Anthony		x	x	x	x	x			x	x		
Caleb	<i>innkeeper</i>	x	x	058	x						x	
Edmund	<i>yeoman</i>	x	x	060	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Edward							020					
Gideon	<i>shoemaker</i>	x	x	x	040							
Job	<i>yeoman</i>	x	x	040	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
John	<i>hatter</i>	x	x	073	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Nich	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Peter	<i>husbandman</i>	x	x	x								
Peter										x		
Youngs, Thomas	<i>rope maker</i>					x	040	x			x	
TOTALS:												
FREEHOLDERS—OLD PURCHASE		10	22	21	23	44				34	40	
FREEHOLDERS—O. B. TOWNSHIP							70		64		64	
MALES OVER												
SIXTEEN YEARS—O. B. TOWNSHIP									77			
		'53	'61	'71	'74	'77	'79	'83	'85	'87	'90	'02

Appendix IV

THE FOLLOWING INVENTORIES OF ESTATE ARE THE ONLY ONES remaining from the first fifty years of Oyster Bay's history sufficiently detailed to be of interest. They are included for two reasons; to give an idea of the implements and possessions of the period, and secondly as an indication of the net worth of the people involved.

In 1678 a merchant worth five hundred or one thousand pounds was considered a good and substantial merchant while a planter worth half that in movables was rich. (O'Callaghan, I, 91) However, there are too few inventories among the Oyster Bay residents to draw any accurate overall conclusions as to their financial status.

INVENTORY OF ESTATE OF SAMUEL FFURMAN 21 April 1682

	L	S	D
Imp. two covers att	07	10	02
Two four year old steers at	10	00	01
One yearling at	01	05	00
Two horses at	06	00	00
Three mares att	07	00	00
Four sheepe att	01	06	00
One sou and four shoates att	01	10	00

42 acres of land at the Cold Spring and privileges in
town at

Halfe A wight of playnes and halfe a wight of meadowes att the south with A share of land upon unknown aye neck	30	00	00
One hose cartt and wheels att	01	00	00
A pair of iron trazes for a hop att	00	08	00
One ox chaine att	00	10	00
One colter and share at	00	10	00
Three iron kittells at	02	00	00
One iron pot att	00	15	00
Two brass cittells and a scillett at	02	00	00
One warming pan at	00	05	00
One frying pay and gridiron att	00	09	00
Three peuter dishes and six putter plates att	02	05	00
One putter basson and one quartt pott att	00	10	00
Three putter poninges and a putter bottell	00	06	06
One iron funnell at	00	05	00
2 Yooke Irons rings and stapells at	00	07	06
One axe and two oagers att	00	06	00
Two broad hoes and a stubbing hoe att	00	09	00
One great chest att	00	12	00
One Cubard and a small chest att	02	05	00
One dripping pan and two pudding panes and a trim kettle	00	07	00
Three tubs and five payles att	00	08	00
One feather bed and four coverleads at	06	15	00
One small ruge and two blankettts att	00	15	00
one home spun bead ticking and seven sheetes	04	10	00
seven pillow beads at	00	10	00
One sett of curtins and valens att	01	00	00

133 19 00

Signed Caleb Wright Constable
Richard Harcutt } Overseers
Job Wright }

INVENTORY OF ESTATE OF WIDOW JOHANNA FFURMAN
6 June 1672

	L	S	D
2 mares 10 L 1 horse 5 L; 2 oxen 12L	27	00	00
2 five year old steeres 12 L two cowes 8 L	20	00	00
One 2 year cow 50 s; 1 yearling heffer 30 s	04	00	00
2 calves 1 L: 3 yearlings soues 2 L	03	00	00
2 3 year barrowes 2 L: 10 s: one 2 year Sou 1 L	03	00	00
1 copper kittell 1 L-10s: 1 brass kittell qt. 2 gall 8 s	01	18	00
2 iron pots and hockes 18s	00	18	00
1 little brass kittell 4s: one pare of tongs 4s	00	08	00
a frying pan 4 s 1 loge chaina 14 s	00	18	00
A chaine 8 s, one broade axe 5 s: 1 axe 2 s:	00	15	00
A:B: for a plow, one peck axe, a sheeve 11 s	00	11	00
one hoe 1 s 6 d 2 old kittles 4 s 6 d	00	06	00
A peece royce 26: one coller 1 s: one bridel 1 s-6d	00	04	06
Horse trases with Swiffell and chaine 3 s	00	03	00
Old sadel 14: a chinesee 3 s a bed & sheets 10S	00	14	00
2 Keelers 5 s: a wooden skinner & Earthen pot 2 s	00	07	00
a peuter pott 4 s: a saltseller 3 s	00	07	00
3 sausars 3 s; one porrenger 1s 6d: a cupe 1 s 3 d	00	05	09
a drain cup & 2 spoones 1s 6d: a peuter pott 2 s	00	03	06
1 peuter platter 8 s: 1 old platter 1s 6d	00	09	06
One basin 6s: 1 earthen dish 1 A	00	07	00
6 wooden dishes & trayes 5 s: 1 cupe 1 s 6 d	00	06	06
Earthen pot 6 d, one spite 3 s: a Bibell 12 s	00	15	06
One dublet breeches & cote 30S	01	10	00
A grinding stone 3 s Heater bed, & an old ticking with a few feathers in it, one rage, one bolster, one sheet 3 pillowes feathers & flock bolster	08	06	00
2 pare sheetes 2 s 10 d: 5 blankets 2 L	02	02	10
power pillow foxes 14 s: 1 pillow 2 s 6 d	00	16	06
2 old chests 10 s: 1 peals 2 s	00	12	00
1 meale trough 2 s 1 pillow 2 s	00	04	00
One pr cotten cardes 2 s: one looking glass 1 s	00	03	00
One wheele 2 s a heckell 8 s: one peale 1 s	00	11	00
One hate 5 s: one 3 year bull 3 L	03	05	00
a gun 2 snordes 1 L 10S	01	10	00

1 lume & tackling sheive to belonging 2 L 10S	02	10	00
2 pipkings 6 d	00	00	06
<hr/>			
	91	10	03

Things missing and thus not included on this inventory:

1 dining forke with 3 tanges	1 pr small mill stones in spindle
2 augers	2 pecks
1 gauge	1 colter
2 wedges	1 iron hay hocks
2 bettle rings	bolt & clevis
1 tennet saw	hooper & boxes
1 broade hooe	stribing hoe

An Inventory taken of the Estate of Richard Willetts late of Lusam alias Jerico in the bounds of Oyster Bay deceased and appraised by us whose names are under or written on the 24th day of the third month called May 1704.

	L	S	D
NEAT CATTLE			
Twelve cows and seven calves	35	5	00
Two 5 year old steers and five 4 year old steers	25	10	00
Four 3 year old cattle & 7-2 year old cattle and 7 yearlings	28	19	00
HORSE CATTLE			
Two riding horses and 2 wild in the woods	15	00	00
Two 3 year old horses & 8 mares all wild in woods	16	00	00
Three 2 year olds & 3 yearling jades	5	15	00
Two old mares wild in woods & one old horse	3	5	00
NEGROES			
One old negro and one negro boy	63	00	00
SHEEP			
Sixty sheep and 15 outstanding	21	15	00
BEDS & BEDDING			
Three feather beds & bolsters with 2 pillows 2 coverlets, one pair of blankets, one pair of sheets with curtains and bedstead to each bed and c:att 8 < > to each bed	25	10	00
One feather trundle bed and furniture	2	00	00
One chafe bed & 2 coverlids; 2 blankets, one sheet			

and bedstead	2	10	00
4: pair of sheets 4 pair of pillow drawers	4	18	00
Two table cloths & 9 napkins and some new cloth			
other lining	2	10	00
His weaving cloaths	5	10	00

IRON WARE

3 pairs of tongs & 2 fire shovells, 2 pair of hand irons and one spit	1	14	00
3 iron < > one gridiron, one trivet, 2 < > one frying pay	2	02	00
4 iron pots one driping pan one pair of small < > one old kettle	2	16	00

PEWTER

Four pewter platters, seven basons, one small platter 18 plates, 6 poringers, 2 small tumblers, 2 tankards; flagon and pot	2	19	09
30 spoons, one small bottle & some old pewter things		18	00
One small brass kettle and candle box and 3 old candlesticks		06	03
One gun: 2 saddles & a side saddle	4	00	00
Earthen ware		14	00
One pair gloves		03	00

CART & PLOW

One cart & wheels; plow shears; chains yoke iron & other small iron things	5	04	00
2: old bead axes 4 narrow axes a third part of some smith tools	3	03	00
One iron crow one whole lance 2 old hoes and other old iron things and a mulock		15	00
an old smiths vice	1	15	00
Part of a brass kettle and a grind stone	1	09	00
7 sickles 2 sickles and and 3 old forks		16	00
One hatchett and teeth for 2 hatchett and teeth of pair of woosted and croscut saw with other carpenters & coopers tools	4	05	00
Harrow teeth wedges and beetle rings			
wood mallet rings for driving wedges	1	07	00
Four & one small box of horse cart hoops boxes	3	06	00
Forty-two bushell of wheat & 7 bushell of barley	7	00	00

One wheat fan 2 ridles sieve and one old pair of boots, old pillion	18	06	
One oval table, one chest, one small trunk & 1 box	1	13	06
Two chests one bos, one table and bench	1	13	06
One couch 15 chairs some old ones 6 old barreslk	2	06	00
Milk vessels and other old lumber	1	16	00
3 spinning wheels 7 glase bottles and 8 bushel of rye	1	10	03
1 looking glass, one bible & 2 other books			
2 meal bags	1	03	00
Debts outstanding	3		

HOUSEHOLD GOODS & WEARING CLOATHS THAT WERE HIS
FIRST WIFES

3 pewter dishes, one box iron one skinner	1	08	06
1 silver spoon; 2 small platters; 2 sausers 2 plates	1	01	00
7 napkins & table cloth 1 box 2 pairs of sheets	3	03	06
Two pair of pillow drawers; one feather bead & bolster and 2 pillows with drawers to them & curtains to them and one pair of sheets, one pair of blankets and two coverlids and bedstead to it	8	19	00
One scarfe, one shift, her other wearing cloaths	3	08	00
3 childs blankets & other things in a bag	2	05	00

CERTIFIED BY *John Townsend*

Signed by Abagail Willetts, John Townsend and Lord Edward Hyde
Cornbury May 24, 1704.

New York, May 30, 1704

Abagail Willetts, widow of Richard Willitts being of the pro-
fession of people commonly called Quakers do solemnly in the
_____ of God the _____ of the truth of what I propose and
declare that _____ written is a true and perfect inventory of all the
goods chattles and personal estate of _____ that has come to my
hands _____ or knowledge or to the hands of any other person
in the

The mark of Abagail Willetts

Appendix V

Endpaper Map drawn by John Cox, Jr. The original is located in the Oyster Bay Town Clerk's office.

Figure 1. Drawn by Van S. Merle-Smith, Jr., in 1950.

Figure 2. Taken from Major John G. Simcoe's *Military Journal* (New York, 1844), p. 94. Drawn early in the Revolution.

Figure 3. Drawn by William M. Stewart from his survey notes, November, 1797. This particular copy, located in the New York Public Library, has an overprint of the Robert Williams Purchase of 1648 and the Bethpage purchase of 1695.

Figure 4. Drawn by William J. Youngs of Oyster Bay in 1833. The original is in the possession of Mrs. Sarah Hoppin, also of Oyster Bay. Figures 5 and 6. Taken from a map of the counties of Kings and Queens, New York, by H. F. Walling as copyrighted in 1859. The original map measures 59 x 61 inches and was printed in Philadelphia.

Figure 7. Taken from Beers *Atlas of Queens County*, 1873, p. 126.

Figure 8. Also from Beers, p. 128.

Figure 9. Also from Beers, p. 129.

Bibliography

THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE IS, OF COURSE, THE TOWN RECORDS which were published in eight volumes under the supervision of John Cox, Jr. Included in the appendices are a host of items from other sources pertaining to Oyster Bay. The indexes are very thorough and the whole makes a work of immense value to the historian in point of both completeness and the ease with which they may be used.

The records earlier than 1660 are missing and a number of other papers were lost in 1901 when a new town clerk's office was built. The old papers were placed temporarily on the basement floor which became flooded. The record books were on top and were not damaged, but the other documents remained on the floor until 1905 with the result that they were reduced to a decayed mass and had to be literally shoveled out.

What these damaged papers were is uncertain, but in 1686 the following were entrusted to the then town clerk:

15 loose papers to be recorded

1 roll of papers concerning The Mayo Tract

1 " " " " Huntington

1 " " " " Lusum (Jericho)

1 " " " " Hogg Island, Oake Neck, and Duck Cove

1 " " superfluous papers

The town patent

The old books of records
The new record book
The Law Books (The Dukes Laws)¹

Of these only the record books survived.

Another important source of original material is located in the Pennypacker Long Island Collection in the Free Library at Easthampton, Long Island. Mr. Pennypacker years ago became interested in Long Island history and has concentrated on Oyster Bay, Easthampton, and Gardiner's Island. Besides a large number of rare books and pamphlets, there are numerous scrap books of original documents which may be located through the card index.

There is a disappointing lack of personal documents such as letters, diaries, and accounts among the source material which makes it difficult to inject that personal warmth found so pleasant in some histories. Even so there is a great deal of work yet to be done to accurately portray the growth of the village during the Colonial period.

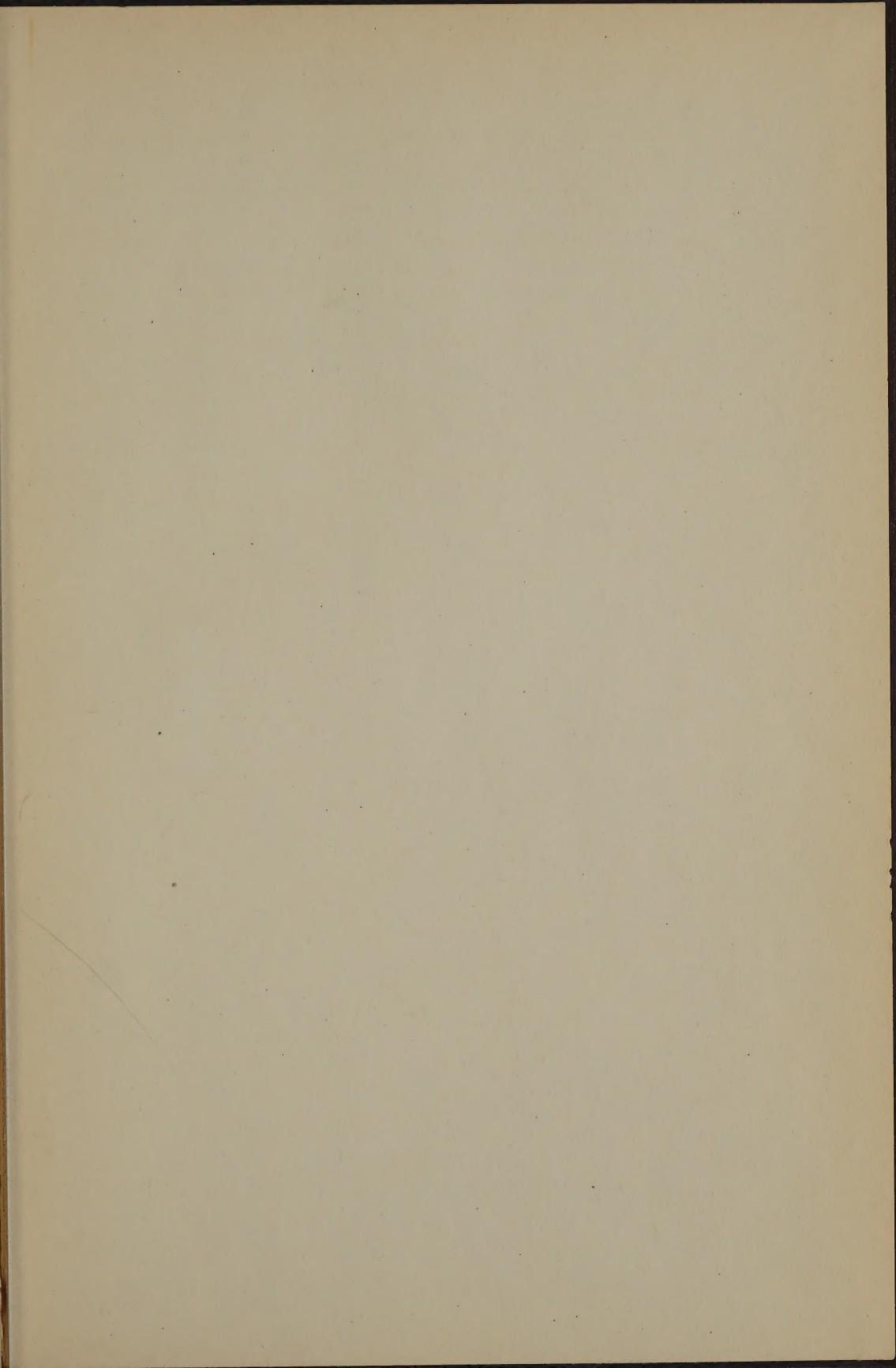
¹TR., I, 330.

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CLEAN UP DEED OF MATEINCOCK
ALL LAND UNSOLD NORTHERLY OF
THE ROAD FROM OYSTER BAY TO
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TO LUDDELL, J. LEFEVRE, W. FROST

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S O U N D

